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# PHOTOPLAY MAGAZINE



"GROWING UP  
WITH THE  
MOVIES"  
BY  
FLORENCE LAWRENCE

AND  
ANOTHER  
JESSE LASKY  
NOVELETTE





*Photo by Bangs, New York*

THE LATEST PORTRAIT OF FLORENCE LAWRENCE





Florence Lawrence at 18, Shortly After She Made Her Debut as a Motion Picture Actress.

AN INTRODUCTION BY MONTE M. KATTERJOHN

ALMOST eight years ago—just after Christmas in 1906, to be exact—a fragile, fair-haired slip of a girl not yet seventeen years of age, applied for a position as "extra" actress at one of the three motion picture studios then in existence in the whole United States. That particular studio was located on the roof of a twelve-story building at 41 East Twenty-First Street, New York City. It must have been Destiny's wish that the nervous little applicant, who leaned far across the railing in asking for work, be engaged, for, more than any other one woman, she has helped to make the motion picture industry what it is today.

Florence Lawrence was the name of that seventeen year old girl. Even today she wonders how it ever came about and just what influence aided her, that she alone out of a host of other applicants was selected that chilly December morning to play a very prominent part in what was intended to be an authentic picturization of an incident in the life of Daniel Boone. She maintains that several girls with far more dramatic experience and "much prettier" than her-

## Growing the

By Florence Lawrence

America's Foremost

*The Authentic and Romantic  
the Maude Adams*

self were among the applicants. And this is one of the peculiar phases of the character and nature of Florence Lawrence. In spite of the fact that countless thousands consider her one of the prettiest of screen actresses, she does not think so herself. Also, she does not believe she is a very good actress. She studies day after day and night after night to improve her work. She is intense.

The fact remains, however, that "Little Flo," as her relatives and friends called her in those days, was engaged and some seven days later began at the Edison studio a career in a profession as strangely new as are the inside workings of the whole motion picture industry to the lay mind even today.

By toil and perseverance, a willingness to accept set-backs as the most natural things in the world, indomitable courage and strength of mind to plan for the future—never complaining, never boasting, she has climbed to the pinnacle of her profession. Her patience, loyalty, and nobleness in the face of irritating and disappointing forces have, next to her natural talent, been her chief assets. As one who has followed her motion picture life from the time she made her studio debut, I can truthfully say that petty passions, egotism, and personal irritations have never marred a single production in which she has appeared, and it is to be noted that she has been appearing in the movies longer than any other motion picture actress. More than a thousand photoplays have recorded her original and delightful personality—a personality absolutely unlike that of any other motion picture player.

## Up with Movies

In Collaboration with  
Monte M. Katterjohn

Moving Picture Actress

*Story of Florence Lawrence—  
of the Movies*

I have enjoyed watching "Flo" Lawrence grow up with the movies, for I am to the motion picture play what the old theatre-goer is to the stage. I have been a "regular" so long I can't remember just when and where I witnessed a motion picture for the first time. I have missed few Florence Lawrence pictures, for to me she has always been a super-delight of the screen. Naturally, I feel that I know her work.

Her whimsical ideas of comedy are a part of her natural self, and this, linked with her talent, her intensely human nature, her loveliness, life and animation, is more than sufficient reason why she is America's foremost moving picture actress.

From the Edison studio Miss Lawrence went to the Vitagraph Company, to become a member of the first stock company ever organized by J. Stuart Blackton. Next, she joined the first stock company ever maintained by the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company, which is now known as the Biograph Company.

As the leading lady of most of the early Biograph dramas and comedies, she attained great popularity, becoming known all over the United States and throughout Great Britain. That was long before the film manufacturers felt it necessary to flash the cast of characters of a photoplay on the screen preceding the showing of the play.

First as "The Biograph Girl," and then as "Mrs. Jones" of a famous Biograph comedy series of pictures, Miss Lawrence was known to millions. Her real name was never known to the picture patrons of those days. I remember writing a letter to the American



A Particularly Attractive Picture of the Florence Lawrence of Today.

Mutoscope and Biograph Company asking for information as to her identity, and whether or not she had ever appeared on the stage before taking up motion picture work. My letter was never answered though I enclosed a stamped and self-addressed envelope for reply. No one knew "The Biograph Girl" by her real name, not even those interested in other avenues of the film industry, as is proven by a criticism in one of the trade journals of those days, which lies before me.

"Of course, the chief honors of the picture are borne by the now famous Biograph Girl, who must be gratified by the silent celebrity she has achieved," wrote the critic, who seemed to be as much in the dark concerning her identity as were her admirers. "This lady," he continued in his criticism, "combines with very great personal attraction, very fine dramatic ability indeed."

The name of Florence Lawrence was heralded far and near by the owners of the Independent Moving Picture Company when "The Biograph Girl" began to appear in picture plays bearing the Imp brand. This was probably due to the fact that Imp films were the first independent pictures to be produced in America, and the owners felt it necessary to employ the popularity of a screen star to dispose of their films. At least, it marked





At Six Years of Age, Little Flo' Made a Great Hit, with "Come, Help Me Tie My Shoestring," a Song Written Especially for Her by One of Her Mother's Friends

the first use of a picture player's name in the same way a stage celebrity's name is employed. Of these incidents, Miss Lawrence will have much to say when she recalls the growth of the independent faction of the picture industry.

Shortly after the Independent Moving Picture Company had secured the services of "The Biograph Girl," a great wall was sent up by the proprietors of picture theatres all over the country, whose patrons had grown to love the sweet little lady of Biograph pictures. Hundreds of letters were received by the owners of the Biograph Company asking concerning the whereabouts of "The Biograph Girl." Exhibitors urged them to re-secure her services. There were many who ceased exhibiting Biograph pictures entirely, substituting the new Imp films. Such was the power of a motion picture star's popularity even at

a time when nobody really knew who she might be.

This fact is clearly proven by turning to the issues of the various trade journals and picture papers of those days. "The Moving Picture World" was then publishing a weekly department known as "Comments on the Films." The department scribe made an error when he spoke of the leading lady who replaced Miss Lawrence in Biograph photoplays as "The Biograph Girl," whereupon that publication received letters from motion picture exhibitors located in every state in the Union taking exception to the statement. One of those letters was reproduced in "The Moving Picture World" under the head, "The Judgment of Paris," and served as *prima facie* evidence of the popularity of "The Biograph Girl." The letter read as follows:

"I have the honor to announce that your man who writes 'Comments on the Films' is crazy as a bed-bug. I have just read what that worthy gentleman has to say regarding the Biograph picture, 'Through the Breakers,' and note that he says 'The Biograph Girl' plays the leading role."

"That picture was shown in Coos Bay, Oregon, the past week.

Another of Florence's Songs was "Roses of Love"



She was Just Three When She Sang and Danced to "Down in a Shady Dell" between Acts. Her Mother Was, at That Time, Leading Woman with the Lawrence Dramatic Company



and at which time I witnessed it. The leading lady isn't 'The Biograph Girl' at all. Whoever she is, she is all right, very pretty, a superb and charming actress, and in every way adorable, but she is not 'The Biograph Girl.'

"The Biograph Girl' who won all the hearts, male and female, in this neck of the woods, was the one who used to play 'Mrs. Jones' in the famous 'Jones' comedies made by the Biograph Company. I could mention a lot more of her plays, but I can designate her best as 'Mrs. Jones.' She has not appeared in any Biograph pictures shown out this way for months and months, and the Biograph people ought to be lynched for letting her get away. She is, or was, appearing in a new brand of films called 'The Imp,' and played the leading role in 'The Forest Ranger's Daughter,' which was shown here on a special occasion. Look in the Independent Moving Picture Company's advertisement in almost any issue of your own magazine and you will see a picture of her. I think they call her Florence Lawrence.

"Anyway, she was 'The Biograph Girl,' and I am confident you could find about

When it Came to Making Up for Such a Part as This, Lotia Lawrence Always Proved Herself a Real Artist



This Picture of Florence and Her Mother was Taken at the Time When They Appeared Together in Edison's Production of "Daniel Boone," Their First Picture Performance

of expression that lay in her features was nothing less than marvelous, and the lightning changes were a wonder. In fact, she was a wonder at everything. Her versatility would be unbelievable if a fellow hadn't seen it. I have watched her play 'Mrs. Jones' in a tantrum, and the following week seen her as a Russian Nihilist girl. I have watched her as a mother, as a highly polished society lady, and also as a Western girl when she would straddle a cayuse and ride like a wild Indian. To see her take these widely varying parts and play each as though she were in her native element, with every pose and motion and expression in perfect harmony with the character



Lotia Lawrence, Florence Lawrence's Mother, as She Appears Today

eight million people in the United States who would agree with me. You could find a lot of them in this town.

"As 'The Biograph Girl,' Miss Lawrence, if that is really her name, was simply out of sight—unapproachable. She was in a class by herself.

In every part she played she was an exquisite delight. Whether comic, pathetic, dramatic, tragic, or anything else, she simply took the rag right off the pole. The power



has indeed been a revelation to myself and the picture patrons of Coos Bay. And to see her in a love scene was enough to draw a fellow right across the continent, if he were not fifty years old and married, and broke.

"And so now you think someone else is 'The Biograph Girl!' If you think I am off my base, just go and see that girl in some Imp picture, and you'll soon discover that 'The Biograph Girl' of yesterday is 'The Imp Girl' of today. I wish she would return to Biograph films because they seem to know just what sort of plays to cast her in so as to bring

The Role Created by Miss Lawrence in the Lubin Release "The Slavey" is a Deservedly Famous One



A Scene from the Lubin Photoplay, "The Bachelor," with Arthur Johnson and Florence Lawrence as Co-Stars

out her talent. Also, that new brand of films is not shown out here."

The above letter is typical of the spirit of all the others received by the various trade journals as well as by the Biograph Company, itself. The public wanted to see its favorite actress.

The owners of the Independent Moving Picture Company demonstrated to the industry that the creation of motion picture favorites was a wise move, and soon other companies began announcing the identity of their players and advertising them heavily. Some forged to the front by reason of merit. Others were foisted on the public by spread-eagle advertising. Prior to that time the movies had been simply a money-making fad, exploited at carnivals, street fairs, and the like, although even then a large number of picture theatres were in existence throughout the United States—about 5,000, to be exact. When the multitude of picture patrons came to have favorite players the primitive stage of the picture industry was passed.

Florence Turner, Gilbert M. Anderson, Arthur Johnson, Mary Pickford, Marion Leon-

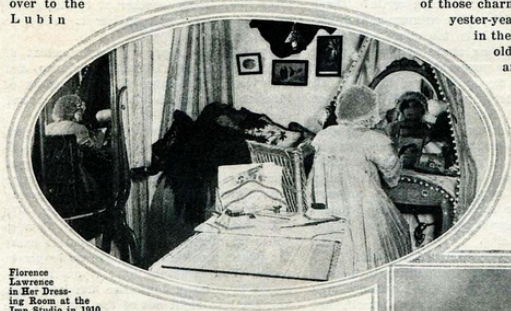


ard, King Baggot and Maurice Costello were other film players who became popular favorites of the public, and who shared honors with Miss Lawrence.

After a year in Imp productions, Miss Lawrence went over to the Lubin

which they list their favorites in consecutive order. The names of Florence Lawrence and Arthur Johnson predominate about three to one.

Who, among the followers of the picture play, does not like to recall some of those charming dramas of yester-year? Linger in the memory of the old picture fan are such notable Lubin produc-



Florence Lawrence in Her Dressing Room at the Imp Studio in 1910

A Splendid Bit of Acting Was Done by Miss Lawrence in This First Season Which She Was Carried Down from the Third Story of a Blazing Building

Company where she played opposite Arthur Johnson, lately of the Reliance players, and who had been associated with her at the Biograph studio. This new connection brought both of these players even greater popularity than ever before, the Lawrence-Johnson team proving the greatest box-office magnet ever known to filmdom. I doubt if two players have ever appeared in pictures who won more response than did these two. Arthur Johnson and Florence Lawrence reached the hearts of the public so unmistakably that hundreds of exhibitors have urged the re-issuing of all Lubin productions in which they appeared. Like the Mary Pickford pictures now being re-issued by the Biograph Company, the Lawrence-Johnson photoplays were far in advance of their time, and would be welcomed today as on a par with the so-called feature offerings.

"I love a great many of the film people, but, oh, you Florence Lawrence and Arthur Johnson," wrote a little Kentucky girl to "The Dramatic Mirror" under the date of June 7th, 1911. "I think they are really the best on the moving picture stage," she continued, "and I think it is a shame the players can't know how we all love to see them and how much the world is learning to love them."

If one doubts the popularity of the Lawrence-Johnson Lubin pictures, let him turn to the files of the dramatic and motion picture papers during the year of 1911. He will find hundreds of letters from exhibitors, exchangemen, and picture patrons in





tions as "Her Humble Ministry," "The Hoyden," "Opportunity and the Man," "A Fascinating Bachelor," "That Awful Brother," "The Slavey," "His Chorus Girl Wife," and "The Gypsy." Who among you who witnessed these charming comedy dramas but would not like to see them again? Don't you think the life of the average motion picture play is entirely too short, especially when it stands far above the average? I like to recall the memorable offerings of past years and, in my mind's eye, see them all over again. Better yet, I would like to see them re-issued that I might compare them with the productions of today. Perhaps such a move would tend to check the mad rush of manufacturers to produce slapstick and burlesque comedies. You who recall the Lawrence-Johnson comedy dramas—compare them with the screen vulgarities of today. There's little doubt as to which class of picture you prefer.

But let us back to Miss Lawrence!

The Victor Film Company, which next claimed the services of Miss Lawrence, was organized by Miss Lawrence, herself, but later became the property of the Universal Film Manufacturing Company. During the first year of Victor plays that name belonged exclusively to Miss Lawrence and her productions. Following the transfer of the Victor Company to the Universal, productions of other than Florence Lawrence manufacture were released under the Victor brand.

But Victor pictures with Miss Lawrence have never fallen into disrepute. After her first year of work under this new brand she deserted the movie studio for the life of a country gentlewoman, taking up rose culture on her beautiful farm in New Jersey, thirty minutes by motor from New York City. The whole world of motion picture patrons rose up as one man with a demand that she return. Every editor of a motion picture newspaper or magazine can testify to thousands of letters received from all over the world asking anxiously about the little star who had graced the screen for so long. They desired to know if there was any likelihood of her returning to her former work, and if so, when. Even Miss Lawrence received nearly a thousand letters, all of them pleading with her to go back to the motion picture stage.

"Though I am only a little crippled girl, I pray every night that you will take up moving picture work once more, and help

me to forget that I am crippled and ugly," reads one of the touching letters received by Miss Lawrence, and which she has saved and treasured.

"I love mother most, my sweet Flo Lawrence next, and my Sunday school teacher after that," reads another of the treasured missives which implored her to return to the screen.

Another was from a superintendent of public schools in a little Florida town, and was treasured because of the standing of its author as well as the sentiment voiced therein. It reads:

"My wife and I have decided to write you, and if possible, learn if there is any possibility of your returning to the moving picture plays. We both love you, and have missed very few of your plays since seeing you in Tampa almost six years ago. We didn't even know your name then. We miss you very much, and do not seem to enjoy the pictures now that you are no longer in them. You certainly have a quality possessed by none of the other film ladies, for you get love right out of the hearts of the motion picture fans. My wife calls you 'Little Flo,' and says she is surely going to meet you when we go to New York next summer. We both adore you, and hope that illness is not the cause of your absence from the pictures."

There are few actresses who can resist pleas of such a nature. These letters of sincere affection were of greater value than even the tonics and medicines of her physician, for Miss Lawrence really was ill, suffering a nervous breakdown caused by her constant and unflinching work before the camera. The strain of portraying comedy roles had been too arduous, and so, at the height of her popularity, she had retired to her roses and her farm to rusticate and grow strong again.

Though her resolve to abandon the motion picture studio was a sincere one, she had not figured on the effect of the pleadings of countless thousands. And when she became well again, she was anxious to achieve greater triumphs. It was the call of art, a call that only those who have experienced it can appreciate. It is a craving for expression—a hot desire to live, and to develop, and to master even greater things.

And so it was with Florence Lawrence. She had achieved much as a portrayor of comedy drama roles, and now desired to

take up a more serious side of photoplay acting. It will be recalled that up to this time she had been practically identified with comedy. It was her desire to excel as a portrayor of serious roles, coupled with the obligation she felt was due her many friends, that brought her back again to Victor plays after twelve months of rest and recreation.

That she triumphed again is well known. Victor photoplays of the past year testify convincingly to this fact. Florence Lawrence dramas, like Florence Lawrence comedies, will be long remembered for the splendid acting and inspiration back of them. The quality which distinguishes them from all other photoplays is undefinable—a something possessed by Miss Lawrence, and Miss Lawrence alone—which demands and rivets the attention.

The space of years since Miss Lawrence began are the years in which the motion picture industry has grown up. Today, it is the fourth largest industry in the world, and as I have shown, Florence Lawrence has been in it during all that time. Of her experiences,

She was an Errant Little Temboy and Quite Irresistible in the Lubin Film, "An American Girl!"



Photo by Bangs, New York  
One of a Series of Uncommonly Attractive Photographs Taken of Miss Lawrence in 1913, Just After She Had Renewed Her Contract to Appear in Victor Photoplays

her work, the people she knew, and the events which transpired, she will tell you herself much better than I can.

Miss Lawrence was born in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, and began her stage career when three years old. Her mother, Lotta Lawrence, was an actress, and as leading lady of the Lawrence Dramatic Company, was compelled to take "Baby Florence" with her on her tours. Though I say she began her stage career at three she actually graced the footlights when not yet a year old, being carried on all wrapped in a fluffy blanket in most of the stock plays given by Mrs. Lawrence's repertoire players.

But it was at the age of three that she made her debut as a player of real parts and as an entertainer between the acts. "Down in the Shady Dell" was one of her favorite songs. She also learned to dance, and would come out on the stage while her mother was doing a song and dance specialty and assist her. The audience would see the child come on and think it an



Photo by Bangs, New York

Florence Lawrence is One of the Few Motion Picture Actresses Who Seem Perfectly at Home in Either Drama or Comedy



error, until she joined her mother and began to mimic her steps, and then a storm of cheers and applause would always follow.

"Baby Florence, the Child Wonder," was a name she gained at this early age. Though her mother did not encourage her to do stage work, she did not oppose her, and "Little Flo" seemed to delight in contriving ways which would necessitate her appearance before an audience. She would insist upon being "property" and when the curtain was raised for the first act, she would be discovered occupying the center of the stage, intensely interested in some book she had found about the theatre, though just able to say three letters of the alphabet. The players who came on would either have to disregard her entirely or pretend she was really a character in the play.

Mrs. Lawrence found it necessary to make up parts for "Baby Florence" in nearly every play or else she would be very bad and horrid and cry just outside the wings during the progress of the performance. It was a hard matter to keep her in her mother's dressing room. But this fact was just an early demonstration of her desire to become a great actress, for she would watch the actors and actresses from the wings night after night and later, they would discover her mimicking them.

The Lawrence Dramatic Company made several tours of the United States. From the time that "Little Flo" was big enough to walk across the stage she appeared before a huge public. Little Lord Fauntleroy was one of her parts, and she played it almost a hundred times. But she preferred doing specialty "stunts" to playing roles, and at six years of age scored heavily by singing "Come Help Me Tie My Shoe-String," a song which was written especially for her by one of her mother's friends. From babyhood, she evidenced a liking for anything which provoked laughter. She learned to wink at her audience the very first time she ever appeared on the stage alone.

The repertoire company gave many performances of pathetic plays like "East Lynne," and "Dora Thorne," and these seemed to depress "Little Flo" to such an extent that she would often cry herself to sleep. She told her mother that she didn't think they ought to make people cry, because people didn't feel good when they cried. The incident so affected Mrs. Lawrence that from then on the more pathetic

plays were almost entirely dropped from their work.

And even today when Miss Lawrence enacts what, in studio parlance, is known as a sob scene, she sheds real tears, and becomes so worked up over her part that she makes it vitally real, even though it is at considerable emotional cost to herself. An atmosphere of reality pervades the entire studio, affecting everyone from the leading man to the property boys, and real tears flow freely. Such scenes frequently grip Miss Lawrence for several days, affecting her to such an extent that she is unable to work. Her director will never permit her to appear in a death-bed scene.

It was only recently that Miss Lawrence read a pitifully real story about a young girl who became a "dope" fiend. It had a tremendous effect on her and a few days later she asked that the story be purchased and scenarioized that she might portray the role of the unfortunate girl, thus bringing the curse of cocaine and morphine vividly before the public.

Her director had observed how intensely Miss Lawrence had studied the character, and how strongly she believed she could portray the role so as to stir up public feeling, but he feared nervous prostration might result from her attempting the part, and so he objected strenuously, finally banishing the whole matter from her mind by interesting her in a rollicking comedy drama—the sort which portrays a romantic young maid as a desperate flirt, snubbing the suitor she loves best that she may make up with him later—and it appealed to her whimsical nature more strongly than did the "dope" story to her serious side. At least the comedy won.

"But if I hadn't had that comedy story at my finger tips she would have brooded over that unfortunate girl of the fiction story until she had had her way," the director told me.

"Little Flo's" education was not slighted because her mother was an actress. Mrs. Lawrence, while not objecting to her daughter's being on the stage, feared she might form an intense dislike for school. Nor did she believe that "Flo" would be content to be away from her mother while attending school. Though still heading her own repertoire company, Mrs. Lawrence moved from Hamilton, Ont., while her daughter was still very young, going to Buffalo, New York, where her daughter took up her studies quite

for her during the mother's absence. Also, there was two older brothers to look out for "Flo," but her mother says she never needed anyone to look out for her.

It was indeed surprising to the mother to note that from the time Florence entered the primary grade she was a most apt pupil, and would pore over her books at night until she had completed all of her lessons for the following day. In spite of her studious nature, she was slightly aggravating to her teachers. She liked to throw paper wads, whisper, make faces behind the teacher's back, and perpetrate all the other innocent



In a Recent Victor Release, "A Singular Crime," She Did a Light Comedy Part to Perfection

Like any other child, Miss Lawrence lived with her mother a part of the time, relatives and friends caring

Last Winter the Victor Company Worked in the Adirondacks for Several Weeks Where Miss Lawrence "Toughed It" with the Enthusiasm of a 14 Year Old



She Loves to Play the Part of a Mother. The Scene Shown Here is from a Picture Called "The Influence of Sympathy"

misdeeds of school rooms. She was full of life and animation, and at times would endeavor to endear herself to her teachers, only to display suddenly a stubbornness as impregnable as the rock of Gibraltar. She was vivacious and sprightly, and beloved of her classmates because she was constantly making them laugh.

When it came to the holiday programs which consisted in the recital of verses, and the singing of songs, "Little Flo" was always the chief entertainer. Though she did not assume the serious task of helping to arrange the programs, she did, in a most matter of fact way, take a big part, and help her girl friends. Her teachers knew better than to try to dictate just what "Flo" should do, as she always selected her own speeches and songs many days ahead and informed her teacher of her plans. Frequently she would recite her speech or sing her song in advance.



"Curfew Shall Not Ring Tonight!" was one of her favorites. If her audience applauded she would respond with an encore, with charming enthusiasm.

Miss Lawrence passed her girlhood in the city of Buffalo, and graduated from school No. 10 on Delaware avenue. Immediately following the completion of her school course she returned to the stage, remaining before the footlights until her mother closed with her repertoire company, when she took up motion picture work.

The mother of Florence Lawrence was one of the best actresses of her day, and though distinctly inclined to do comedy, she did some of her best work as a portrayer of more serious roles. She was most versatile, and as leading lady of her own company which produced all sorts of plays, comedy, drama, melodrama and tragedy, she had played no less than five hundred different roles. She proved a real artist when it came to making up for a character such as an old hag, a "painted lady" or a stern New England mother.

Fortune was not kind to Mrs. Lotta Lawrence, and it was a struggle for her to care for her two sons and "Little Flo" until they could care for themselves. Of recent years she has been fortunate. She has turned business woman and deals in real estate and farm lands. She has invested wisely, and has profited through the development of the mineral resources of certain sections of Canada. She resides near Toronto, visiting her daughter at New York and at her New Jersey farm several months every year.

"When Florence was just a tiny girl," says the mother, "she told Daniel Sully, the well known actor manager, that she was going to become a famous actress when she grew up. She was sincere about it too."

"Then you must be my leading woman," said Mr. Sully, to which the child agreed. She was hardly four years old at the time.

"Florence has always been very ambitious, and she has always striven for something high and good. As a girl she displayed such indomitable ambition that I did not doubt for a minute but that she would become a really famous actress. When she took up motion picture work I was inclined to frown upon the work. Now I am glad she did, though my mind was then set on having her follow the stage as a career after she had convinced me that she would never

be satisfied with any other kind of life. I am what some people term an actress of the old school, and even today, am inclined to think that much that occurred in my day was far superior to present practice, but still I am convinced that it is now possible for one to gain a greater fame in the motion picture field than ever was or is possible on the stage."

One's first meeting with Florence Lawrence is in the nature of a readjustment, but it is none the less refreshing. One rather expects to find a somewhat larger, more mature person than is Miss Lawrence. Yet at the same time you almost imagine her stepping right out of the screen toward you.

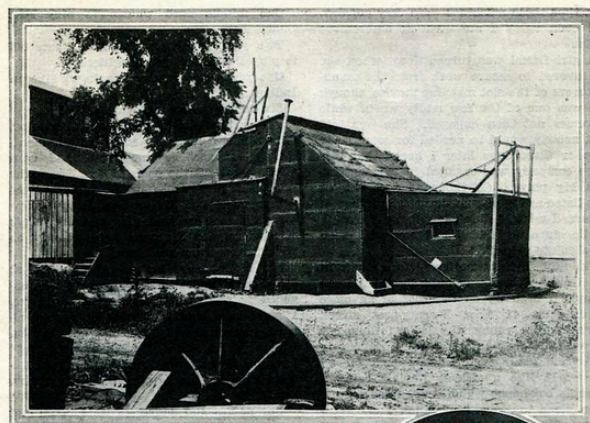
The little lady herself is wont to place a wrong construction upon the attitude of her friends when they first meet her, for she always feels that people are disappointed in her.

Disappointment, on the contrary, is the last feeling to which anyone is open, for she is all that the camera represents her to be and more. All the spontaneity and natural charm are there in flesh and blood, and she proves quite the living ideal of those who have ever admired her from afar. She is a very straightforward little person, like a delicate piece of Dresden china in appearance, with much spirit and animation thrown in. After meeting and talking with her one feels that he has not only met and talked with America's foremost moving picture actress, but also, that he has met a woman of brilliant attainments, one who is amply fitted to become a leader in the gigantic world tasks about us.

#### FLORENCE LAWRENCE TAKES UP THE STORY

Before I had ever acted in front of a moving picture camera I had witnessed only a very few dramatic pictures. Most of the film plays I had seen prior to my initial work for the Thomas A. Edison Company were travelogues, chase-comedies, and impossible pictures like that of an engine climbing over mountains and house-tops, for instance.

These were just short length subjects. Also, there were then a great many pictures of very commonplace happenings; a boot-black shining a pair of shoes, a horse eating hay, or a man kissing his wife. I do not



The First Edison Studio, Likewise the First Motion Picture Studio in the United States. Built on a truck so that it could be moved about with facility. Courtesy, Thomas A. Edison



Edwin S. Porter, the Edison Company's Manager of Negative Production at the Time "Daniel Boone" was Produced

mean that all the moving pictures of eight years ago were of this sort, but that the bulk of those I had witnessed were.

I do recall seeing a photoplay in which the late Joseph Jefferson appeared as "Rip Van Winkle," another portraying the life of a New York City fireman, several comedies of very short length which ridiculed the New York City police force, and still another called "Moonshiners." I have since learned that the last named picture was the first dramatic picture play to be produced in the United States.

It seems strange to me that I did not see "The Great Train Robbery" which was produced by the Edison Company, as I have since read that it was one of the very first pictures ever made which was one thousand feet in length, and also, that it was the strongest dramatic picture available for almost a year. Even today I have never seen that picture.

To me, in those days, motion pictures were quite a novelty. In theatrical circles in New York it was said that a company known as the American Mutoscope and Biograph Com-

pany was anxious to secure actors and actresses to appear in five minute sketches which they were photographing. Prints were made from the films, which were cut apart and pasted on flexible cards. These were then placed in consecutive order so as to make continuous action when rifled, and fastened in a circular holder. There are thousands of people who will recall the five-cent slot machine which showed moving pictures—just little acts, in which all the action took place in one room or in one spot. At



that time these machines were very popular, and even today I see them at amusement parks.

A girl friend was turned down when she endeavored to secure work from the manufacturers of the slot machine movies, though she was one of the few really worth while actresses not then engaged. She was told that nobody would be needed for some time. Two or three days later I heard that this same company was engaged in making several big plays. (A thousand foot subject was listed as big play at that time.) Though I wanted work, I didn't try at the Biograph studio since my friend had met with such an absolute refusal.

The first skylight motion picture studio in the United States was built by the Edison Company, high up on the roof of an office building at 41 East Twenty-first street. Though quite young, the Edison Company were then the oldest picture producers in America. Their first studio looked for all the world like a "Black Maria," being a movable box-house which was hauled around from place to place, and which I once saw over in Bronx Park several years after it had been discarded.

My mother heard that Mr. Edwin S. Porter, then the chief producer and manager at the Edison studio on Twenty-first street, was engaging people to appear in an historical play. I decided to see him at once. My mother accompanied me to the studio.

The news of intended activity on the part of the Edison people must have been pretty generally known, for there were some twenty or thirty actors and actresses ahead of us that cold December morning. I think it was on December 27th, 1906. At least it was during the holidays. Everybody was trying to talk to Mr. Porter at one time, and a Mr. Wallace McCutcheon, who was directing Edison pictures under Mr. Porter, was fingering three or four sheets of paper, which I found later were the scenario.

Mr. Porter and Mr. McCutcheon conferred together and Mr. Porter announced that only twelve people were needed for the entire cast, and that some of these had been engaged. He next read off some notes he had made during his conference with Mr. McCutcheon, about as follows:

One character man who can make up to look like Daniel Boone.

One character man to play Daniel Boone's companion.

One middle aged woman to play Mrs. Daniel Boone.

Two young girls about sixteen years old to play Daniel Boone's daughters.

One young girl who can make up like an Indian maid.

Six men who can make up as Indians.

The parts of Daniel Boone, his companion, the Indian maid and a couple of the blood-thirsty savages, he announced, had been filled. That left the parts of Mrs. Boone, the two Boone girls, and four Indians open. As I remember, Col. Cody's Buffalo Bill show was then in New York City and the people selected to play the parts he announced as "filled" were from the show.

Mr. McCutcheon looked at me, then at Mr. Porter, and I was told that I was engaged as one of Daniel Boone's daughters. I must have said something to mother almost instantaneously, for one of the men, I forget which, asked, "Is this your mother?" I replied that she was, and Mr. Porter thereupon engaged her to play the part of Mrs. Daniel Boone.

Our names and addresses were taken and we were told "that was all" for the time being, and that we would be notified when to report at the studio. We were to receive five dollars a day for every day that we worked.

There was none in the cast who knew the title of the play until we reported for work on January 3, 1907. At this stage of the motion picture industry the producers were very secretive about such matters. "Daniel Boone; or, Pioneer Days in America," was announced as the name of the play. We began work on the exterior scenes first.

Besides mother and myself, others who were playing principal roles were Susanna Willis, and Mr. and Mrs. William Craver. Mr. Porter and Mr. McCutcheon were the directors. It was during the production of this picture that I learned that the photoplay, "Moonshiners," which I had witnessed some three or four years previously was the first dramatic moving picture ever made in America, and that Mr. McCutcheon was the man who directed it.

All of the exterior scenes for the Daniel Boone picture were photographed in Bronx Park. As one of Boone's daughters I was required to escape from the Indian camp and dash madly into the forest, ride through streams and shrubbery, until I came upon Daniel Boone's companion. As a child I

was fond of horses and had always prided myself on being able to handle them, but the horse hired by Mr. Porter was evidently of a wilder breed than the ones I knew. I couldn't do anything with him, and he ran off no less than five times during the two weeks we were making the exterior scenes. I was not thrown once, however.

During all this time the thermometer stood at zero. We kept a bonfire going most of the time, and after rehearsing a scene, would have to warm ourselves before the scene could be done again for the camera. Sometimes we would have to wait for two or three hours for the sun to come out or to get it just right for the taking of a scene which required certain effects. The camera was also a bother, being a great clumsy affair.

One afternoon we didn't pay sufficient attention to the bonfire and permitted it to spread. The fire department had to be called out to prevent its burning and ruining all the trees in the park. While beating the blaze away from a tree Mr. Porter discovered a man who had committed suicide by hanging himself, probably while we were working on the picture. We did not do any further work that day.

All the interior scenes were made at the Edison studio, on the roof, where the stage space would accommodate but one set. We could only work while there was sunlight, as arc lamps had not then been thought of as an aid to motion picture photography. Three weeks were required to complete the picture.

When I witnessed the finished production as it was flashed on the screen about six weeks later I was very indignant. In one scene I was shown crossing a log over a stream, and wearing shoes with high heels. Just think of the situation! Daniel Boone's daughter wearing high-heeled shoes! Why,

in those days girls were fortunate indeed if they possessed a pair of moccasins. Notwithstanding its many defects, the picture "went" and was a huge success. The public did not demand perfection in those days.

By reference to my scrap book wherein I have preserved a bulletin and synopsis of the picture as issued by the Edison Manufacturing Company, I find that it was listed as a "Class A" production, was one thousand feet in length, and that positive prints commanded the princely sum of one hundred and fifteen dollars, or fifteen cents a foot. Few films sell for that amount nowadays, ten cents a foot being the standard price. At that time the business office of the Edison Manufacturing Company was located at 31 Union Square, New York City.

Now that I was a moving picture actress, or rather, that I considered myself one, I began to take an interest in moving pictures, and I soon learned that there were many different brands of film besides the Edison and the Biograph. I witnessed Vitagraph and Lubin pictures which were as good as the Edison picture in which I worked. Pathe Freres and Melies films also were shown in New York City in 1907.

I began to see how other actresses looked, and I studied their work, particularly those who appeared in Pathe Freres pictures, which were made in France. So were the Melies films, but these were trick comedies. I arrived at the conclusion that I would try to become a regularly employed motion picture actress, and when I informed my mother of my intentions, she laughed.

"Why, Florence, you won't make enough to pay for the shoe leather you will wear out in looking for work," she said, and discouraged the idea.

But my mind was made up. I liked the work, and I positively did not feel that the motion picture play was beneath me.

*THE second installment of "Growing Up With the Movies" will appear in the December PHOTOPLAY MAGAZINE, which will be for sale on all news stands November 10th. In that installment we will learn of the early trials of Florence Lawrence, and Florence Turner as well, of the secrecy surrounding the Vitagraph studio in 1907, and how "Little Flo" was substituted for Florence Turner when David W. Griffith sent for Miss Turner.*



# Growing Up with the Movies

By Florence Lawrence

In collaboration with Monte M. Katterjohn



## PART TWO

MOTHER was right. She knew that the motion picture companies of that early period were not over-exerting themselves to find the particular types needed. I don't mean that I represented any particular type, or was especially talented, but I do know that my training should have given me an advantage and it didn't. I did not stand any better chance with the picture producers than the other girls who sought work. I suppose I considered myself a superior actress—who doesn't at that age—but I was soon convinced that my services were not in demand.

I made inquiries at several different studios—the Vitagraph, the Edison and the Biograph—and was told there was nothing for me. So I cast about for other connections. I soon came to agree with my mother that there was nothing to acting for the movies. Certainly one couldn't make enough to buy clothes and meals and shoe leather.

Mellville B. Raymond was organizing his "Seminary Girls" company, with Dave Henderson as star about the time that I was receiving courteous refusals from the clerks at the various studios in response to my question if any extra girls were needed. So I

gave up motion pictures with a snap of my fingers and returned to the stage.

I was engaged to appear in "The Seminary Girls," only to learn that there would be six long weeks of waiting before the play would go into rehearsal. So I was still up against it, for my savings had dwindled to almost nothing and I did not want to ask my mother for a single penny.

Some one told me that the Vitagraph Company in Brooklyn was making preparations to produce an Irish play, and that perhaps they might want a few extra people. Employing my broadest Irish brogue, I besieged the heads of that company—and much to their amusement—for one of the leading parts in the play. It was Dion Boucicault's "The Shaughraun." At that time no one considered the matter of copyrights and the like, and any book or play was considered the property of any film producer.

J. Stuart Blackton, the present vice president and secretary of the Vitagraph Company of America, and Albert E. Smith, the present general manager of the company, looked me over from head to foot and informed me that I was entirely too young to play any role in the play. However, they

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were very kind and suggested that I wait just a few minutes—something might happen that would enable them to engage me for some other picture.

These two young men, Mr. Blackton and Mr. Smith, had been associated together as picture producers since 1900. Their first studio was on the top floor of the old Morse Building at 140 Nassau street, New York City, and most of their pictures were taken on the roof there. In 1906 they purchased a plot of ground at Greenfield, which is now in the Borough of Brooklyn, New York. First they built an open air studio, but results were far from satisfactory, and about the time that I was appearing before the camera for Edwin S. Porter of the Edison forces in "Daniel Boone," Messrs.

Blackton and Smith were adding the finishing touches to their studio—a two-story building constructed of concrete blocks, with the

A Picture of Miss Florence Lawrence  
Taken in 1907  
Photo by Stacy N.Y.



"Little Did I Dream That Gilbert M. Anderson Was To Become One of the Most Famous Picture Stars in the World"

gaged. I was patient, though nervous, and sat looking out into the studio yard, which was filled with all the debris of their building operations. Huge piles of rock, bags of cement, empty barrels, concrete blocks, building scantling and the like were strewn over the yard helter-skelter.

Finally Mr. Blackton came from some secret, inner recess of the studio and asked me to go with him. I was to be given a trial rehearsal. If satisfactory, I would be engaged. I followed him—how all-powerful and mighty he seemed then!—into an ad-



Mr. William V. Ranous has Played A Most Important Part in My Motion Picture Life Thus Far  
Photo by Stacy, N.Y.

studio on the second floor.

William T. Rock, a successful promoter of cheap amusement enterprises, had become interested in the work of Blackton and Smith some three or four years before and had made the studio possible by backing the ideas of the two with his money. Mr. Rock was made president of the company at the outset and still holds that position.

It was at this recently constructed studio, of which the owners were very proud indeed, that I waited, hoping, and

secretly uttering prayers, that I would be engaged.

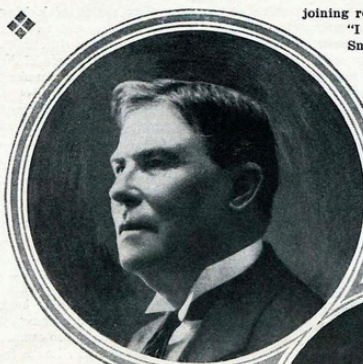


joining room where Mr. Smith was waiting.  
"I think you are too young," said Mr. Smith.

His tone was not encouraging, either.

"Show us how an Irish girl would look and act," Mr. Blackton ordered, and they waited.

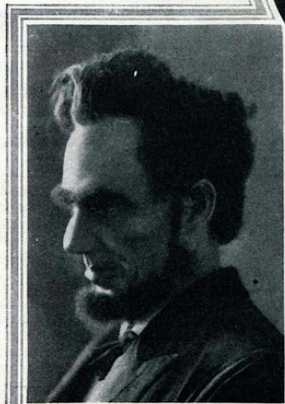
After doing two or three little bits of business, I stepped over to a corner of the room, smoothed my hair and walked out to them again, with my most dignified air, and awaited their decision. Mr. Smith's face was impassive, but



© Vitagraph  
Good Old Mr. William Shea Who is Still a Vitagraph Player, Assumed the Role of Cow in "The Shaughraun."

Ralph Ince in His Own Portrayal of Abraham Lincoln—He was Just an Extra Actor, Now and Then Serving as Property Man, When First I Knew Him

Photo by Stacy, Brooklyn



© Vitagraph  
Mr. Kent Referred to Me Several Times as "That New Little Girl"

there was a smile around Mr. Blackton's mouth, and he turned to his partner, spoke a word or two, and they informed me that I would do.

I was engaged to portray *Moya*, an Irish peasant girl, and was given orders to report for work on the day following, when the picture was to be begun. I had lots of fun playing that part.

Good old Mr. William Shea, who is still a Vitagraph player, assumed the role of *Con* in the play, and during the picture's production we spent most of the time riding around on an old donkey that wanted to do everything in his own way and not in Mr.

Blackton's and Mr. Smith's way. These two always worked together on the early Vitagraph pictures, serving in the capacity of director, camera-man, and property man. At that time they were not making money so fast that they could afford a man for every little task. But about that donkey. The exterior scenes of the picture were taken in Central Park, New York, and we had to use a whole flock of sheep. The first day that we worked outside the donkey became frightened at the sheep and positively refused to become a movie actor. Nearly every scene that day was ruined. On the second day I successfully coaxed him with lumps of sugar, and as the picture neared completion we became fast friends. Mr. Shea really liked that donkey, and regretted finishing the exterior scenes, simply because that meant we were through with him.

William Shea in real life, is as good-natured, jolly and friendly as he is on the screen. During the making of "The Shaughraun" he would make us all laugh, Mr. Blackton and Mr. Smith included, by twisting the donkey's tail and making him kick, or by cutting up in some way, or telling jokes, and I have never heard any actor or actress who was associated with him during the long time that he has been a picture player, (though really a very short time in the reckoning of years) speak ill of him. He has been content to work for his original employers, never letting the changes in the industry affect him in any way whatsoever. He is to be complimented. Perhaps there are some among you who do not recall him readily—he is the man who made Davy Jones a great motion picture character, and who recently appeared as the man of many parts in "Mr. Bingle's Melodrama," as the conductor in "A Train of Incidents," and as Uncle William in "Hearts and Diamonds."

I can recall but one serious accident which occurred during "The Shaughraun's" production. A scenic painter named Duffy fell into a pool. It was in Central Park when the rope by means of which he was descending the cliffs, broke. He was rescued. The scene was rehearsed again, and—the rope broke again. Finally, however, they got a rope that held and the scene was finished.

After working in "The Shaughraun," I deserted the motion picture studio for my stage engagement with Melville B. Raymond's "Seminary Girls" company and toured the United States.

Then followed another period of looking for work in New York City and again I sought out the Vitagraph studio. Mr. Smith selected me to play the lead in a story of the Civil War called "The Despatch Bearer," and in which I was required to do a lot of horseback riding. I don't think wilder and meaner horses were ever engaged for picture work than those Mr. Smith hired for me to ride. Of course he didn't know this until after I had tried them out. He expected me to be perfectly at home on the back of any mount, as I had told him I could ride almost any horse with the ease and grace of a Lochinvar.

Three different horses were used as one in that picture, and the public never noticed it. The first one had been abused before he was brought to us, and would try to buck me off. He would whirl round and round and round, then suddenly charge the camera man. After one day's work Mr. Smith instructed the property man, a Mr. Ackerman, to secure another horse for me. But the second horse proved just as fractious as the first one, and ran away the instant we began photographing the scene, although he had worked well during rehearsals. Also, he laid down and tried to roll with me on his back. The third horse proved a little better, but was treacherous, and was constantly becoming frightened at what was going on around him. To this day I am certain that my life was in danger throughout the production of this picture.

#### An Interlude by J. Stuart Blackton

I remember "The Despatch Bearer" picture very well, although this was a subject that was under Mr. Albert E. Smith's personal direction. In fact, it was one of the first pictures on which we did not work together. The particular day I have in mind, however, I went down with the players to "The Cedars," a thick wood near Sheepsh-head Bay, which, alas, is now cut up into suburban lots. Very few of the original cedar trees are left.

Miss Lawrence, who was a splendid rider, was playing the part of volunteer despatch bearer to the Union forces. She had been given the general's orders—we called them "the papers"—which her lover was unable to carry farther owing to his grievous wounds. Miss Lawrence made one or two rides through the winding path among the trees, closely pursued by Confederate sol-



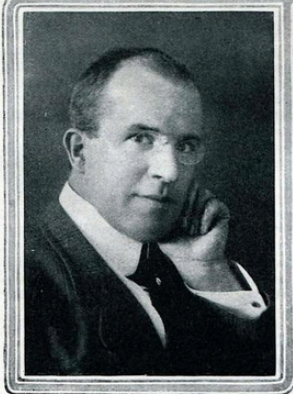


Photo by Binger, N. Y.  
David W. Griffith, Recalling Miss Lawrence's Work in "The Despatch Bearer" Asked Her to Call and See Him

diers. One of the runs was not fast enough, and had to be done over. As Miss Lawrence came dashing towards the camera at break-neck

J. Stuart Blackton Who Directed "The Shaughraun" the First Vitaphone Picture in Which Florence Lawrence Appeared

Photo by Stacy, Brooklyn



speed, her horse suddenly swerved and ran so close to one of the tree trunks that it seemed to all of us that her brains must certainly be dashed out. Everyone asserted that her head had missed the tree by only a hair's breadth. I think Miss Lawrence was the least agitated of us all.

#### Miss Lawrence Resumes the Story

In one of the scenes for "The Despatch Bearer" I was to portray the heroine dashing into the chief officer's quarters and handing him "the papers," which contained important information concerning the Con-



© Vitaphone

It Was at This Studio That I Waited and Secretly Uttered Prayers That I would Be Engaged

federate army. Mr. Smith had instructed all of the players to use lines to fit the situation in order to lend realism to the scene. I was rather afraid I did not know what a person would say under such conditions, so I decided to ask Mr. Smith, and then decided that I had better not. I had represented myself as thoroughly capable and I didn't want to belie my words, you see, and not until the scene was rehearsed for the first time did I know just what I would say. When I did dash into the room, and had placed "the papers" in the officer's hands I fell to the floor, exclaiming:

"I've done the deed and got the badge!"

Mr. Smith gave me some lines of his own invention to speak after his laughter had spent itself; so when the camera recorded the action, I might have been heard saying: "Here are the Confederate plans! John was shot! I brought them!"

And that reminds me of another incident, when we were doing "The Despatch Bearer." I was to enter a room hurriedly and inform its occupants that the Southern soldiers were coming. For some reason or other the word "British" came into my mind, and when the camera was clicking away, I dashed into the room, screaming, "The British are coming! The British are coming!" I looked straight at the camera as I said this, and in the finished picture it took only a little observation to discover what I was saying. And a second later the Confederate soldiers dashed into the room. It was really laughable.

While I am discussing lip reading, let me remind you that the stage actress can make you laugh or cry, as she wills, if she has the training. But the picture actress is hard put to it. She must make you see the laugh that you cannot hear; must make you feel the sob that you cannot hear. And she must make you see and feel so strongly that you will laugh and cry with her. And so on through the whole gamut of emotions. A soft curve of the mouth must say, "I love you." An eyebrow in one position must express, "You lie, villain!" In another, the same eyebrow must show, "Rather than be your wife I will plunge over that cliff!"; in another, "Won't you come to tea?"; and in still another, "Just let me prove my love for you." That is a whole lot of work to ask one eyebrow to do, but the eyebrow must be on the job all of the time, likewise the lips, the nose, the mouth, the eyes, the arms, the fingers, and even the feet. The eyebrows and the lips are, however, most important of all, and they must work in harmony.

Think of an actress beaming upon the leading man—in the picture—and at the same time, saying, "You big chump, don't you dare kiss me?" I know of many picture players who indulge in "smart talk" during the production of picture dramas. Lip readers all over the country see and know what actually was said and the player soon loses his following. Of course I am frequently dismayed at not being able to speak the proper lines, but ever since my days at the Vitaphone studio I have tried to lend realism to my scenes by saying the very words I believed would be said by a real person in such a situation. A sound rule to follow.

I do not think I am vain to say that I made good with the Vitaphone people, for they did not discharge me, but kept me long after

"The Despatch Bearer" was finished. I appeared in a dozen or more pictures, sometimes under the direction of Mr. Smith and sometimes under the direction of the Blackton, and sometimes under the direction of both, with the added help of Mr. William V. Ranous, who was then the Vitaphone studio manager and stage director.

Sufficient praise cannot be bestowed upon Mr. Blackton and Mr. Smith. It is utterly impossible for me to set down my thoughts so as to make you feel and know how high a place they have in my regard. They have achieved their wonderful success only through the hardest kind of work, always studying, experimenting, and trying to improve their output.

When I was a Vitaphone player they would write their own stories, direct them on the stage, and, if actors who suited the parts couldn't be had, they would play the parts themselves. They were constantly inventing and adding improvements to their camera and printing machines. The different formulas for developing their negatives through continuous experiment were made better and better. They were at their desks or experimenting in their laboratories long before their employees would arrive in the morning and hours after they had gone to their homes at night. And above all, they were unfailingly kind and generous, always ready with an encouraging word for anyone who needed it.

In this connection I remember one picture I was appearing in that demanded that the leading actor be an expert chauffeur,—also that he be a very good actor. At that time the combination of actor and chauffeur was very scarce—so scarce, in fact, that Mr. Blackton, in despair at the difficulty of finding an actor who could drive an automobile, had about decided to play the part himself. Just then Harry Solter, who is now my director, walked into the studio. Mr. Blackton looked across at the newcomer, then rushed toward him, jerked his hat off his head and looked at him, full face, side face, compared their respective heights, then said, "You'll do," and instructed the surprised actor to make up immediately so as to look as nearly as possible like him.

When the two were "made up for the camera"—Mr. Blackton and Mr. Solter—it was very hard to tell them apart. In the picture Mr. Solter did all the acting, up to the point where he was required to drive an automom-



bile at dare-devil speed. Then Mr. Blackton became the villain in the play. The public never noticed the difference and gave Mr. Solter credit for doing some wonderful feats of driving. The title of that picture, if I remember correctly, was "The Automobile Thieves."

On that same first day—when I sought work—I met delightful Florence Turner. I doubt if there is any actress better known to followers of the films and especially to Vitagraph picture fans. She is now located in London, England, where she has her own company of players under the name of "The Turner Film Company, Ltd." Miss Turner was working in a photoplay version of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet," that day, playing Juliet, of course. Paul Panzer, just at present the villain in Pathe's "Perils of Pauline," was the Romeo of the play.

While waiting between scenes, Miss Turner stood beside me and answered all the foolish questions I asked. She was very kind, and generous, indeed. "They don't tell us much

"I Do Not Believe Any Artist Glories More in the Plaudits of an Audience to Which She is Visible than I Do in the Applause of the People Who See Me Only in Pictures"



This is One of Miss Lawrence's Latest Pictures. It is Already a Great Favorite with Her

about the work," said Miss Turner, "for fear we will leave and tell their secrets of production to some rival company." I was soon to learn just how stringent were their rules.

A Recent Picture of Florence Lawrence by Bangs, N. Y.



It was shortly after the making of "The Despatch Bearer" picture that I heard that it was ready, and would be shown in the exhibiting room. Naturally, I desired to see myself on the screen, and started to enter the projecting room—I think it was downstairs in the cellar then—when Mr. Ranous stopped me and said:

"You can't go in there. No one is allowed in the projecting room but Mr. Blackton, Mr. Smith and Mr. Rock," whereupon he ordered me away. I was surprised indeed, and a few minutes later, when Mr. Ranous had left, I slipped into the room, only to be stopped by some one at my back. It was Mr. Ranous.

"How in the world do you think I can ever improve my work if I never see how I act?" I asked.

For a second Mr. Ranous seemed to be considering my request, which was certainly reasonable, but he said:



"My dear little girl, don't worry. Mr. Blackton or Mr. Smith will tell you all you need to know about your work. If you don't improve, they will tell you. Besides, you can see the pictures in which you appear when they are shown to the public."

It was useless to argue further.

No one dared enter the laboratory, or any of the other departments where Mr. Blackton and Mr. Smith were constantly working out improvements for their pictures. Notices were posted on all the doors and about the studio informing the employees, from property boy to star, just what he or she must not do. So we all learned—apparently—to keep our eyes closed, our ears deaf, and pretended we were the most satisfied individuals in the world.

I tried very hard to succeed, in spite of the fact that I could not even see all the pictures in which I worked, as I did not know where they were shown. I was living with my mother in New York City then, and each evening I would talk over the day's events with her, tell her what I was supposed to do the following day, and together we would work out the action we thought was proper. And generally we were right. Also, I came to be a regular picture fiend, attending two or three theatres every evening. I wanted to watch the other actresses and see how they did things.

I have always liked to visit the picture theatres, especially when some picture in which I have taken part, is shown. Usually, I get off in a corner and listen to the comment. And when the audience applauds, you've no idea how strange it all seems and how much real happiness it means to me, too. I do not believe any artist glories more in the plaudits of an audience to which she can make acknowledgment than I do in the applause of the people who see me only in pictures. Several times I have been recognized by people in the audience while watching my own pictures, and it has been simply awful. The word always spreads quickly that I am in the theatre, and I am fairly mobbed for autographs, or I have to shake hands for an hour or more.

The first time I saw myself in a picture was terribly disappointing, but I believe I told you about that. It was the "Daniel Boone" picture. I looked so clumsy to myself. I was not in the least charmed with my screen image. In fact, I have never been really satisfied with any work I have ever

done before the camera. Rather, as I said before, my first work was full of faults, and very annoying to my peace of mind. I felt like going up to the screen and saying, "You little goose, why didn't you do it this way instead of that way?"

I would show the "little goose" on the screen just how I would do that particular bit of "business" if it were to be done over again, and later, I would thank my stars that I didn't have to do the scene again, for fear that, for all my pains, I'd find that my second attempt was worse than my first.

Ralph Ince, whose portrayals of the martyred Abraham Lincoln have become world famous, and who is considered today one of the foremost motion picture directors, was just an extra actor, and now and then even served as property man when I first knew him. I remember him very well, because of his exceedingly quiet and retiring nature. He would stand for hours watching the directors and actors at their work, never saying a single word or even trying to be seen. One might have thought that he didn't care if the world came to an end the next day. We worked in several pictures, "The Athletic Girls of America," being the title of one of them. In this he was required to carry me a short distance, and though I have never weighed much over a hundred pounds, he had a hard time of it.

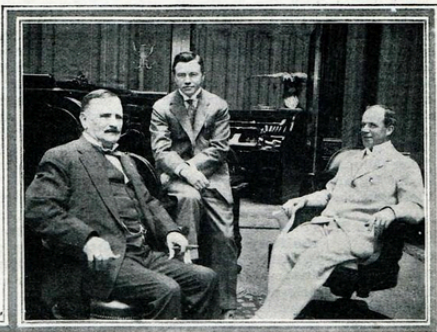
In this same picture another memorable incident occurred. The lead was an athletic girl who had gained quite a reputation as a boxer. In one of the scenes I was supposed to "mix-it" with this girl, and went at it rather reluctantly, since I was afraid that she might be a really clever boxer. I had frequently put on the gloves with my two brothers, and was not a green-horn by any means. Nevertheless, I was a little afraid of her. When the scene was rehearsed we fared very well, but during the actual taking of the picture I became a little angry when the athletic girl "biffed" me a little harder than I thought she ought. My ire rose and I went in for blood, landing blows left and right, and I sent Miss Athletic Girl to the floor in a jiffy. It made a corking scene for the picture, but for a time my position was in jeopardy, as Miss Athletic Girl, so I was told, demanded that I be discharged.

Hazel Neason continued to appear in Vitagraph productions for three years after I left that company. Later she became a Kalem player, then returned to the studio



where she had played her original picture roles. A year or so ago she became Mrs. Albert E. Smith—wife of the Vitagraph Company of America's treasurer and general manager—and gave up her motion picture acting.

Charles Kent, a most capable and thorough actor, whose wonderful work in "A Tale of Two Cities," and "Daniel in the Lion's Den," will be long remembered by the film world as well as by the movie audiences,

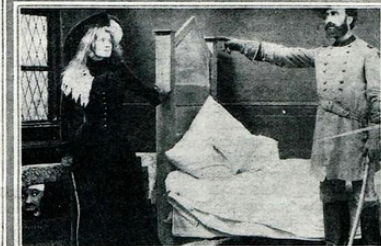


The Vitagraph Triumvirate. Reading from Right to Left—William T. Rock, President; Albert E. Smith, Treasurer and General Manager; J. Stuart Blackton, Vice-President and Secretary

Broadway star productions. He toured the world for Vitagraph in 1912.

I was getting along splendidly with the Vitagraph Company, had received two raises in my salary, and felt

Harry Solter, Who Made Up to Look Like J. Stuart Blackton in "The Automobile Thieves"



A Scene from the Vitagraph Picture "The Despatch Bearer"

was one of the very first of the important figures of the legitimate stage to turn to the motion picture play. Mr. Kent has been a professional actor since 1875, and his past career has been as eventful and remarkable as any actor could possibly wish for.

I don't seem to be able to recall the titles of the pictures in which we worked together, but I remember very well that he referred to me several times as "that new little girl," and also told a fellow member of the company that "that new little girl's golden hair is very pretty."

Of William V. Ranous I shall have considerable to say later, since he has played a most important part in my motion picture life thus far. I owe him much. Just now he is a member of the Vitagraph organization quartered at Santa Monica, California, and is appearing only in Vitagraph



pretty secure when the unexpected happened. I joined David W. Griffith's company of players and commenced work in Biograph pictures at the old American Mutoscope and Biograph Company studio at 11 East 14th street, New York City. I was offered more money, which was quite an inducement because I discovered that I was always wanting more. I was going to be given an opportunity to do bigger and what I considered better things. In fact, I was to be featured in the big plays of those days, but all of them were single reel productions.

#### Monte M. Katterjohn Takes up the Story

At the Biograph studio David W. Griffith had just turned director after having proven his ability as an actor, and began the assembling of what was to become the most famous motion picture stock company of players ever known. Harry Solter, the actor who had impersonated J. Stuart Blackton, was a member of Griffith's organization, and the director lent a kind ear to the suggestions of Solter, who had had much stage and dramatic experience. Also, they had been close friends before the days of motion pictures.

Mr. Griffith had witnessed several Vitagraph productions in which Florence Turner displayed uncommon talent. Mr. Griffith liked her immensely and suggested that Mr. Solter go over to the Vitagraph studio in Brooklyn and have a talk with Miss Turner.

Solter was instructed to make her an offer, and endeavor to induce her to leave the Vitagraph studio.

Obedying instructions to the letter, Solter stationed himself a short distance from the Vitagraph studio and waited for the end of working hours, when he hoped Miss Turner would pass by and he would have an opportunity of placing Mr. Griffith's offer before her. But Miss Turner had left the studio for the day an hour or so before Solter had arrived.

Florence Lawrence was detained later than usual that day, and Solter was about to give up seeing Miss Turner when he observed Miss Lawrence emerge from the building. They were on speaking terms, so they strolled along together and Miss Lawrence learned that David W. Griffith was wanting a leading lady, though unaware that Miss Turner had been selected for that position.

"Probably Mr. Griffith would be interested to see you," was Solter's casual remark, as the two returned to New York.

The next morning Mr. Griffith was told about the little girl with the golden hair and became interested in Solter's story, and investigated her past work as a picture actress.

"Ask her to call and see me," Griffith told Solter, who promptly conveyed the news to the anxious Miss Lawrence at her home.

And so it was that Florence Lawrence became the star of Biograph productions instead of Florence Turner.

**T**HE third installment of, "Growing Up with the Movies" will appear in the January issue of Photoplay Magazine, which will be for sale on all news-stands December tenth. The great director David W. Griffith, will figure largely in this next installment of Miss Lawrence's autobiography.

And that famous Biograph Company of which Arthur Johnson, Marion Leonard, Max Sennett, Harry Solter, Wilfred Lucas, Mary Pickford, and Owen Moore were members, will come in for its share of attention. Miss Lawrence knew all of these stars intimately and has innumerable stories and anecdotes to tell of the studio life at the Biograph plant.



# Growing Up with the Movies

By Florence Lawrence

In Collaboration with Monte M. Katterjohn

## Part Three

**M**OVING Picture Artists in the Making" would surely be a fit title for this chapter of my story, which shall concern that period of time when I was associated with the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company—more recently known as the Biograph Company—for more of the present day's recognized artists began their motion picture careers in the Biograph studios during those twelve months than in all the other studios combined.

And it seems such a little while ago that many of the men and women whose names are to-day gracing the lobbies of hundreds and hundreds of photoplay theatres were glad of the opportunity to work even as "extras," putting in from two to three days in a week's time. Of course, there had to be some sort of a beginning, and I suppose that was the way Dame Fortune intended their beginning should be. In fact, all of the picture people I know came into their own through some fortunate accident. Holding their own has been and is still quite a different matter.

As in my own case. It was



Photograph by Range, New York

Under the Tutelage of "Larry" Griffith I Not Only Improved My Work, but One Bright Morning Woke Up to Find Myself Famous as "The Biograph Girl"

Matt and Owen Moore Are Excellent Picture Players, and When I Founded the Victor Company I Engaged Both of Them



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just an accident that I was engaged to work in the Daniel Boone picture by Mr. Porter; a still greater accident that Mr. Blackton selected me to play the role of Moya in "The Shaughraun" and, as shown by Mr. Katterjohn's account of my advent in Biograph pictures, that was a still greater accident. Fate's dark conspiracies concerned me not in the beginning. "Getting in" seemed rather easy. Making good was a horse of another color.

Generally speaking, the actors and actresses employed in those days were far below to-day's standard, and still a few of them were superior to many of the present-day players. Ours was a motley collection. We came from here, there, and everywhere, and from all walks of life. Some of us had had stage experience and some had not. We were merely a collection of ambitious beings, each harboring the belief that he or she was destined to become famous. How? We did not know.

When I commenced working at the Biograph studio there was no stock company. That is, a

In "The Slave" Mr. Solter's Portrayal of a Young Roman was Well Nigh Perfect, and Mack Bennett Proved an Excellent Guard. (Mr. Bennett Stands at the Extreme Right of the Picture)



I Came to be Known as "The Girl of a Thousand Faces"

regular company was not maintained which listed a leading man, leading lady, ingenue, character man, character woman, and villain as being regular callers for the weekly pay envelope. True, there were three or four regularly employed actors and actresses who were paid a weekly guarantee, as in my case, but it was not uncommon to make actors out of the property men, actresses out of the factory stenographers, and now and then to call in some passer-by, never caring or even inquiring as to his vocation, and turn him into a picture actor.

Some four or five months after I joined the Biograph Company, a permanent stock company was organized, the first, I believe, ever maintained for motion picture acting exclusively. Those of the extra people who had demonstrated some ability during the months that preceded the stock company's organization were the fortunate members of that company. We were David W. Griffith's selection of



Photo © Moody, N. Y.

"There Is Something About Miss Lawrence that Makes Everybody Love Her," Reads a Letter Received by the Editor of PHOTOPLAY. The Letter Continues, "She Is the Spirit of Youth Itself"







Photo by Bangs, New York  
 Matt Moore Did His First  
 Picture Work with My  
 Company, Though Long  
 After Biograph Days

what he thought to be the best available talent in New York City.

The story of Director Griffith is as necessary to my account of Biograph days as is flour to the making of biscuits. That is, my story cannot be told coherently without considerable mention of David W. Griffith. As for biscuits, I doubt very much if they would be coherent without the use of flour. Frankly, there would not be any biscuits.

David W. Griffith is a big man in the motion picture world to-day, for it has been said that he is the highest paid motion picture director in the world. There can be no doubt but that he is a very able artist. Five years ago he was struggling and striving with the rest of his company of players, and it was under his tutelage that I not only improved my work enormously but also woke up one bright morning to

find myself world-famous as "The Biograph Girl."

Seven years ago Harry Solter and David W. Griffith were stranded actors out in San Francisco. They were unable to get work—steady engagements—and their friends had loaned them just as much as they cared to. Aside from acting, Mr. Griffith had taken to writing plays during his spare time. Failing to get any of them produced out on the Coast, he came East, Mr. Solter accompanying him. They arrived in New York City without money and soon discovered that the immediate prospects for work were none too flattering.

#### An Interlude by Harry Solter

"Larry" Griffith—his nickname was "Larry"—was down and out, and so was I, for that matter. Neither of us could find work in New York; we seemed to fare worse on Broadway than when out in 'Frisco. We decided we could do best by looking for work alone. Each was pledged, if he got a job and a possible chance for the other, immediately to pinch it. After inquir-



Photograph by Moody, New York

"The Best Actors and Actresses of the Stage," writes Florence Lawrence, "Do Not Invariably Make the Best Moving Picture Players"

Tom Moore, a Brother of Owen's and Matt's, is Also a Photographer at present Identified with Kalem Films. He is Married to Alice Joyce, the Beautiful Kalem Star



ing at the accustomed places and learning that there wasn't anything for me in the way of a stage engagement I went over to the Vitagraph studio in Flatbush, Brooklyn, and secured work as an extra actor. It was during this engagement that I became acquainted with Florence Lawrence. Every day that I worked I received five dollars, and I managed to get in four or five days every week from the start.

After my first day's work I joined "Larry" in a little New York restaurant. He was dog tired, having made the rounds of all the different offices, and was about as downhearted as any man I have ever seen. Well, I told him of my good luck, and suggested that he try getting work at some of the different motion picture studios. I gave him the addresses of three. I knew he would not be able to get work over at the Vitagraph studio, since a notice had been posted that evening that no "extras" would be needed for a week or so, and that all casts were filled.

I suggested to "Larry" that he try the Kalem Company, also the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company. All casts were "full-up" at the Kalem studio, so he learned, but they promised to notify him if anything turned up. At the Biograph studio his luck was better, for he was engaged as an extra actor and began work immediately. The first week I think he worked three days, receiving five dollars a day for his services, but later he began to show what he could do and was retained as a regular actor.

A couple of months after he made his initial appearance before a picture camera, the regular Biograph director failed to show up at the studio and inquiry brought out the fact that he was ill and would probably not be able to resume work for several weeks. The company was behind with their productions. A director was needed at once. By chance the heads of the company asked Larry if he thought he could produce a picture, and he promptly told him that he knew he could.

His first production was a picture which had been previously arranged for by the sick director. The actors and actresses had all been engaged, the sets arranged and ordered, and practically all of the preliminary work done. And Larry took hold of the work like an old-timer, whipping out a corking production. The heads of the company liked it and let him try his hand on another which turned out even better than the first

picture. Larry Griffith has been directing ever since.

Shortly after he began directing picture productions I found myself out of employment and Larry, learning of this, gave me work in Biograph pictures. I had been working over at the Vitagraph studio, in Brooklyn. Under Mr. Griffith I was a sort of studio jack-of-all-trades, being actor, assistant to the director, and general utility man.

Picture producing in those days was considerably more of a job than it is today, and a director certainly had his hands full. Griffith was put to it many times for capable people—actors and actresses who could do something else besides wave their arms and roll their eyes. He began to cast about for his players, his selections, in most instances, being governed by youth, beauty and ambition. One of my duties was to keep him posted on the different people wanting work.

Florence Turner had attracted his attention through some extraordinarily good riding she had done in a Vitagraph western picture. The demand was strong for western pictures and Larry had a notion that pictures which breathed of the prairie and had a beautiful maiden as the heroine were bound to "go big." He decided to get Florence Turner if he could, so he sent me to open negotiations with her. As you have already learned, I interested him in Florence Lawrence instead, but it was through no pre-arranged scheme. I had failed to find Miss Turner, had encountered Miss Lawrence and accidentally told her that the Biograph was wanting a leading woman. The result was that Larry engaged her because he wanted a leading woman who could ride a horse at break-neck speed, at once.

#### Florence Lawrence Resumes the Story

When I presented myself at the Biograph studio I was exceedingly anxious and nervous. I have always been so in new and strange surroundings. I inquired for Mr. Solter, who had urged me to try my luck with the Biograph, and later, brought me word that Mr. Griffith desired to see me. While waiting for Mr. Solter an exceedingly lanky and tall young man came into the general waiting room. He seemed to know who I was at a glance, and, though he was shabbily dressed and wore a badly battered





Mary Pickford Is Utterly Charming. She Has a Captivating Poise and a Frown All Her Own that Are Irresistible

hat, I grasped the fact that he was an important official of some sort. It was a certain matter-of-factness about him that impressed me. He came towards me, saying:

Owen Moore, the Husband of Mary Pickford



"I was just inquiring about you, Miss Lawrence." Then I knew that he was Mr. Griffith. Mr. Solter entered the room at the moment and was a little surprised to find Mr. Griffith talking to me about the work to be done.

"Can you ride horses?" asked Mr. Griffith. "I would rather ride than eat," I told him, which was the truth. My folks used to say that they never waited meals for me if they knew I was horseback riding. When I am riding before the moving picture camera, I really forget the picture and everything else. And I always act better in such scenes because I am not acting at all. I am just having



The Home of Commodore Benedict. One of the Most Beautiful in America, Was Used as a Stage-Setting for "The Cardinal's Conspiracy," in which Billy Quirk Assumed a Minor Part. Mr. Quirk Is the Young Man Standing on the Porch, to the Right—The Young Man with the Mustache

fun. Of late the pictures I have appeared in have not called for much of this kind of work, but that fact has not dampened my ardor for galloping 'cross country at break-neck speed. Also, I intend working in some pictures soon in which my equestrian abilities will be needed, and then you shall see.

"You worked in Vitagraph's 'The Despatch Bearer,' didn't you?" Mr. Griffith asked.

"You were very good in that—it was a good picture," he added, after I had answered his question and explained the difficulties under which the picture was produced. Mr. Solter had stepped to one side and was standing near a door that led back into the studio, when Mr. Griffith turned away saying:

"Wait just a few minutes. I'll be right back."

"I think she is the very person I want," I heard him say to Mr. Solter as he passed out



Mack Sennett, Now the Famous Star of Keystone Comedies, Portrayed 'The Villain' in Most of the Dramas and Melodramas Produced at the Biograph Studio of the room. I could not imagine where he had gone, and thought that if he intended giv-

Miss Lawrence in Her Dressing Room



ing me work, I was the person to be told and not Mr. Solter. Hardly a minute had passed when he re-entered the room accompanied by a great, big, dignified man who stopped just inside the door, looked me over from head to foot, spoke a few words to Mr. Griffith, and disappeared back into the recesses of the studio. As Mr. Griffith came forward I came near asking who the dressed-up individual was, then thought better of it. At the Vitagraph studio I had learned that it didn't pay to be inquisitive. But Mr. Griffith knew what



Miss Lawrence about the Time She Joined the American Mutoscope and Biograph Company

I was about to ask.

"That was Mr. Kennedy," he explained. "He said he hoped you could ride just as well as you look."

After I had got over my embarrassment we talked of the salary to be paid, the work expected, and a lot of other details.

"You might as well begin right now," he remarked and, though I was just a little afraid of myself, I was eager to do so. One hour later I was dressed like a cow-girl—knee-length skirt, leggings, blouse waist with sleeves rolled above my elbows, pistol holster swung about my waist, a water

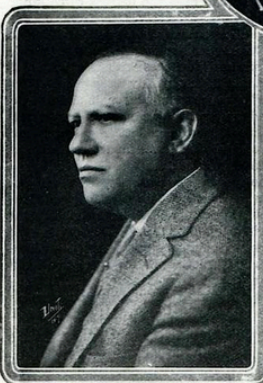


pouch slung carelessly over my shoulder, and a big sombrero on my head. My hair was loose. The camera was clicking off a scene for "The Girl and the Outlaw." Charles Ainsley was the outlaw and I was the girl.

As the title suggests, it was a story of the wild and woolly west, and produced in the vicinity of peaceful Coytesville, New Jersey, a town which was the scene of most all the sensational western dramas until about three years ago, and this in spite of the fact that it was almost impossible to make a scene that even remotely resembled the west. There was always a telephone pole around close enough to come within range of the camera, which was never discovered until after the scene had been photographed. In "The Girl and the Outlaw" one of the scenes was supposed to represent a section of primeval forest on a mountain side. The finished print showed some perfectly lovely and well pruned maple trees on the slopes of the towering mountain. It was only after the film manufacturers realized that California afforded continuous sunshine as well as an infinite variety of background that the fields and hills of New Jersey were discarded for the

Mr. Laemmle Flattered Me Greatly. "You Are Such a Lovely Girl," He Said. "That You Can't Help Making Me Rich!"

Photo by Untch, N. Y.



In a Series of Pictures Produced by Director Griffith, Billy Quirk Became Famous as "Mugsy" with "Little Mary" Pickford as His Sweetheart. In Vitagraph's "The Girl from Prosperity," Mr. Quirk Was But An Older Mugsy.

a good horseback rider for leading woman in "The Girl and the Outlaw," and I was in the saddle in almost all of the exterior scenes. The story, if my memory serves me rightly, concerned a young eastern girl who had gone west and fallen in love with an outlaw. She brought about his reformation by keeping him from holding up the stage coach, or robbing the village bank—I forget which it was. In several of the scenes I had to ride like fury to overtake the outlaw and prevent him from carrying out his plans. I think it was my riding in that picture that made me a permanent fixture around the Biograph studio. But the work was so severe and trying that I was unable to work in the next western picture Mr. Griffith proposed to make. He was rather disappointed, too, but soon "framed-up" a story



Photograph by Bangs, New York

This Is One of a Series of Uncommonly Attractive Photographs of Miss Lawrence Taken in 1913

real thing. While with the Biograph Company I appeared in no less than a dozen wild west pictures, all of which were made just outside of New York City or in some New York park.

There was certainly need of a good horseback rider for leading woman in "The Girl and the Outlaw," and I was in the saddle in almost all of the exterior scenes. The story, if my memory serves me rightly, concerned a young eastern girl who had gone west and fallen in love with an outlaw. She brought about his reformation by keeping him from holding up the stage coach, or robbing the village bank—I forget which it was. In several of the scenes I had to ride like fury to overtake the outlaw and prevent him from carrying out his plans. I think it was my riding in that picture that made me a permanent fixture around the Biograph studio. But the work was so severe and trying that I was unable to work in the next western picture Mr. Griffith proposed to make. He was rather disappointed, too, but soon "framed-up" a story

with many interior scenes. "Betrayed by a Handprint," was its melodramatic title, and in which I portrayed a society belle, who, losing at bridge, stole a beautiful diamond necklace from her hostess only to be found out by a handprint she made in the dust on the dresser while stealing the necklace. From cow-girl to society belle was rather a change, but all in the day's work just a few years back. Nowadays if a director should ask his leading lady to do as much she would certainly have something to say. Edith Storey of the Vitagraph players and Pauline Bush of the Rex-Universal pictures are the only two actresses I know who seem to be as much at home on the back of a cayuse as in a drawing room.

The very next picture in which I appeared was a Mexican drama with soul stirring action. Throughout my year at the Biograph studio I worked along this plan—a western picture, a society drama or comedy, and then a frontier or Indian picture. "The Red Girl" was the title of the first Indian picture produced by Mr. Griffith after I began playing "leads," and of course I was the red girl. Every time I think of that picture I have to smile. My make-up was so realistic that I looked more like a tramp than a fetching daughter of Lo. At the studio I canvassed the opinions of everybody to learn just how to make up for the part. Nobody seemed to know how I ought to look. So I did the best I could and the result was hideous. And the strange part of it all was that Mr. Griffith did not object to my make-up in any way whatsoever. I hope that picture is never re-issued, for I don't want anyone ever to see my idea of what an Indian girl should be. No, I won't tell you how I was painted up. Suffice it to say that I was anything but "darling." And think of it—that picture was one of the first Biograph features, being one thousand and fourteen feet in length, and positive prints sold for fourteen cents a foot. It was released for exhibition on the fifteenth day of September, 1903.

One of the greatest bothers we had to contend with during my Biograph days was the assembling of large crowds whenever we had to make an exterior street scene. I say "exterior street scene" to make it plain that we frequently made interior street scenes. I recall several pictures in which I worked in which the street scenes were painted sets and all the camera work was done in-

side the studio, though the finished picture looked much as if we had found the very location we wanted right in New York City. All the directors were bothered with the crowds which gathered whenever it was discovered that we were going to do outside work, particularly if the scene was to be made in the business section or in a tenement district. And even today the collecting of large crowds, the tying up of traffic occur as a result of the insatiable curiosity of the passers-by and are a source of annoyance to the director. Nowadays it is the custom to "slip" the first policeman who comes upon the scene a five dollar bill and everything is O. K. until another "copper" comes on the scene. Then the wheels of progress must be greased anew.

Crowds annoy most actors and actresses. I confess I have always felt a little shy when a boisterous throng surrounded me during the making of a picture. In a great many of the Biograph comedies I worked in we were frequently forced to do all sorts of "funny stunts" out in the open and in front of large crowds. I always felt particularly foolish when we were doing comedy business in the open. Mr. Griffith used to trick the crowds by concealing the camera in a carriage. We would drive to our location, hastily go through our parts, get back into the carriage and be off before very many people could collect.

It has always been the delight of children to try to force themselves in front of the camera. The grown-ups seem to think it great fun when some little dirty-faced, ragged urchin interferes with the taking of a scene. And it is really very hard for a "rattled" and nervous player to forget the surroundings and play a part as he should. When large crowds collect rehearsals are passed up and the scene made in a sort of hit or miss fashion.

In the studio we generally have two rehearsals of a scene before it is finally recorded by the camera. The first is called a rehearsal for "mechanics." That is, we just go through the pantomime which the director tells us is necessary for that particular situation. Next, we go through it with "feeling," as the saying is. Then we are ready for the camera. It often happens that a player is called upon to rehearse comedy, drama and tragedy, one after the other. Once Mr. Griffith directed me in a scene for a comedy—"The Road to the Heart," I



think it was called—in the morning, in several scenes of a problem melodrama called "What Drink Did," immediately after luncheon, and we completed the day's work by retaking a scene for a near-tragedy—"The Romance of a Jewess." This is one of the most trying experiences that happens to the moving picture player who conscientiously tries to feel his part.

This matter of "feeling the part" injects into the picture just the element needed to make it a convincing and true life portrayal. I once heard an actor chide a little girl who was with me at the Biograph studio because she became "worked-up" over her part and cried as if her heart would break. The situation demanded just that. I told the actor what I thought of him. And the "moral" of it is that the actor is still listed as an available "extra" and the little girl is one of the best known motion picture actresses in the country.

Picture players have many difficulties to contend with—even more than their fellows of the legitimate stage. Upon one occasion which is but an instance of many, I saw a moving picture actress collapse purely as a result of the strain caused by a defective camera. She had gone through the emotional rehearsal of a strong situation to the satisfaction of the director, and the scene was then begun for the camera. While she was at the height of her dramatic situation the film in the camera "buckled" and the whole scene had to be done over. This happened a second time, and even a third. It was more than high-strung human nature could stand. The result was a swoon not of the studio variety and the actress was unable to work for several days.

When I first began acting before the picture camera I did not realize the importance of the work I was doing. I was totally unaware that the time would come when silent drama acting would be criticised and judged by the regular dramatic critics of the theatre as severely as that of the regular stage.

I have seen many players lose their nerve in front of the camera—old-timers, at that, who think nothing of acting before a vast throng of people within a theatre. Others can't keep from looking into the camera while they are performing, which is "bad acting" in the movies, and something we are never supposed to do unless we have a situation that requires us to look directly at

an audience. This is frequent in comedy, since there are many scenes which require the player to look straight at his audience and to go through facial contortions to bring the laugh. It is especially so in the lower forms of comedy such as slap-stick, and rough-and-tumble. As a general rule the best actors and actresses of the stage do not make the best moving picture players because of the fact that their stage success is due too largely to a magnetism exercised by means of the voice. Quite recently I saw one of the best known actors in the United States in a five reel motion picture play, and though the audience "stood for it" I am confident that there were many who would vastly have preferred to see their movie matinee idol portraying the role. The actor I speak of would strike a pose in nearly every other scene which seemed to ask, "Now am I not the handsome lover?" or "Don't you think I'm some hero." To me, the picture was disgusting in spite of the fact that the play was a picturization of one of the best novels I have ever read.

I had been with the Biograph Company but a short time when plans were begun for the formation of the Motion Picture Patents Company. Up to this time the method of distributing the positive prints of the picture plays being manufactured was very poor. Also, certain manufacturers had sprung up almost overnight whose business methods were questionable. It was necessary to place the motion picture industry on a better footing and one which would preserve it as well as protect those manufacturers who had paved the way. Negotiations were begun by the interests controlling the Edison studio. At this time the Essanay, Selig, Kalem, Lubin, Biograph, Vitagraph, Pathe, Edison and Melies films were the best to be had. Some of these brands of films were being marketed under licenses issued by the holders of the Edison camera patents. The other big factor was the licensees of the holders of the patents on the Bioscope, or in other words, the Biograph Company. Of course all of the individual manufacturers possessed certain patents, but decisive law-suits might have proven these to be infringements on either the Edison or the Bioscope patents. Under the name of the Motion Picture Patents Company the nine different manufacturers pooled their patent rights and formed the General Film Company for the owning of film exchanges

throughout the country. With the exception of Pathe, this arrangement still stands, and no one questions the statement that the General Film Company is the most thorough and efficient agency of its kind in the world, and in spite of the fact that there are numerous other large agencies, namely, the Universal, the Mutual, the Paramount, the Eclectic and the World.

The formation of the Patents Company with the Biograph Company as one of the chief producers gave added impetus to our work, for the studio output was increased. Prior to that time there had been talk of long legal battles, seizure of cameras, and the like, and no one would have been surprised had the studio been suddenly closed and notices posted. But the motion picture industry began to get its second wind. Many of the mushroom concerns which had not been included in the Patents Company were forced out of business. The elimination of their product made way for more and better pictures. Mr. Griffith was now permitted to spend from \$500 to \$600 on a single-reel picture, although he had been getting along with allowances of \$300 and \$400 previously. Better studio sets, better costumes, and better studio conditions were now possible. The feeling of more freedom had as much to do with the result as did the actual change.

Followers of the photoplay will recall "The Voice of the Violin," "The Lure of the Gown," Edgar Allan Poe's "The Raven," "The Song of the Shirt," "The Resurrection," "The Test of Friendship," "The Slave," "Lady Helen's Escapade," "The Way of a Man," "The Fascinating Mrs. Frances," "The Reckoning," "The Note in the Shoe," "The Deception," and the "Jonesy" comedies as some of the memorable early Biograph productions. Not only are they memorable because of acting and settings, but because of the story itself and the photography.

Mr. Griffith was most fortunate in securing scenarios suited to the players he had. Mr. Lee Dougherty, Mr. Roy McCardell, Mr. Stanner, E. V. Taylor and Mr. Griffith himself composed the scenario staff, although their other duties were manifold. Mr. McCardell was not an employee of the company, however. When the Biograph began to progress there was never a time when I felt that the many parts for which I was cast were not suited to me.

Biograph photography has always been a marvel. Arthur Marvin, who had much to do with the perfection of the camera used at the Biograph studio was Mr. Griffith's camera man, and he came as near to getting one hundred per cent results as any camera man I have ever known. Mr. Marvin was interested in the Biograph Company, as was the Mr. Kennedy to whom I have already referred. Both men were indefatigable workers with a penchant for details. Mr. Marvin has been dead for several years. Mr. Kennedy is still the active head of the Biograph Company.

I came on the studio stage one day to find Mr. Griffith and Mr. Solter hustling around, brooms in hand, sweeping, cleaning and straightening up things generally. It looked as though preparations were being made to take a wind-storm scene on the Sahara Desert. When I made inquiry as to the reason for this sudden determination to beautify the studio both Mr. Griffith and Mr. Solter said, "Sh—sh—sh," and placed their fingers on their lips. Then they whispered, "Mr. Kennedy is coming to examine the studio." So I too, piled in and helped them, plying the duster and mop with telling results. We were so busy that we did not hear the door open, but suddenly, out of breath from our exertions, we ceased work simultaneously, turned, and there stood Mr. Kennedy, a broad smile on his face, enjoying the scene as much as though he were watching a "Jonesy" comedy. At that moment one would not have thought him the President of the Motion Picture Patents Company—the man who has done more to put the motion picture business on a sound commercial basis than any one else.

"My children are very industrious today," was his sole remark.

When I joined the Biograph Company the players then engaged for regular work were George Gebhardt, Charles Ainsley, Ashley Miller, David Miles, Anita Hendrie, Harry Solter, John Cumpson and Flora Finch. Two or three weeks later Mack Sennett, Arthur Johnson, Herbert Prior, Linda Arvidson and Marion Leonard were added to the company. Arthur Johnson had been playing extra parts for Mr. Griffith before I joined the company. Miss Leonard had been a member of the company prior to my advent among them, but had left to go on the road with a theatrical company. I had always admired Miss Leonard for her remarkable



beauty, and when she renewed her connections with "the Biographers" as we came to call ourselves, we became close friends.

Of these pioneers, only John Cumpson has passed over the great divide. It was Mr. Cumpson who helped to make the "Jonesy" pictures so popular, for he was "Jonesy." When we undertook the first picture there was no intention of making a series of comedy productions, but when the exchanges began asking for more and more "Jonesy" pictures, we kept it up until I left the Biograph Company. Mr. Cumpson was the most serious comedian I have ever known. Nothing was ever funny to him, and he never tried to be funny. When all the rest of the company would laugh at something he had said or done he would become indignant, thinking we were making fun of him. What turned out to be the first of the "Jonesy" pictures was called "A Smoked Husband," a play in which groundless jealousy gets its just deserts. Instead of being called "Jones," Mr. Cumpson as the jealous husband, was called "Benjamin Bibbs," and how the public ever came to calling him "Jonesy" is more than I know. I played the part of Mrs. Benjamin Bibbs. Here, let me quote a line or so from the bulletin synopsis issued at that time by the publicity department.

"While our friend Benj. Bibbs was not exactly parsimonious, still there were occasions when he kicked most vigorously against his wife's extravagance. Such an occasion opens our picture. Miladi Bibbs has just sent home a hat and gown, for which poor Bibbs has to give up, but when he sees her attired in the duds, he softens, for she certainly looks stunning. All is well until she turns around—when, Oh! Horrors!—it is a sheath gown of most pronounced tussie. One flash is enough. 'You brazen hussy, to appear thus! You—You—!' He could say no more, for he fairly choked with rage."

And so the story goes, "Bibbs" spying upon me. When the maid's sweetheart calls, my husband believes he is my lover, and "Bibbs" hides in the chimney to watch and wreak vengeance. Just at this point in the production of the picture Mr. Griffith gave orders to light a fire in the open grate so as to get in an added comedy situation. An old grate was being used, and one which would not permit Mr. Cumpson's crawling out at the back, as are most "property" grates. The fire not only gave Mr. Cumpson

a warning but smoked him pretty well. It was very hard, afterward to make him believe it was a part of the picture and not a trick that had been played upon him. He was the most ludicrous sight, and his intense indignation made him all the funnier.

The "Jonesy" comedies kept up with the fashions of the times, as was evidenced by the "sheath" gown in "A Smoked Husband." One of the most enjoyable as well as laughable of this series was "A Peach Basket Hat," in which I wore one of those inverted baskets which every other woman in the United States wore for a season or so. Then there was the pantaloons skirt which also came in for an inning in these comedies. We were quick to seize upon any new style and make it the basis for a comedy. Of course all the time-honored differences between husband and wife were pictured, as in "Her First Biscuits."

Mr. Cumpson left the Biograph Company to appear in Edison pictures at about the same time I became identified with "Imp" pictures. There he was known as "Bumptious," but the series of comedies put out under that name failed to interest as had the "Jonesy" pictures.

Arthur Johnson and I played opposite each other in a great many Biograph pictures, the first of which I think was "The Planter's Wife." Others were "Confidence," "The Test of Friendship," "A Salvation Army Lass," "The Resurrection," and "The Way of a Man." Mr. Johnson was such a delightful artist that it was always a pleasure to be cast to play opposite him. He is even funnier off the stage than on. When he gets one of those sanctimonious parts, which he just delights in, he keeps the whole company in a roar. He likes to josh the other players and he sometimes says the funniest things.

I enjoyed playing opposite him in "The Resurrection" more than any other part during my Biograph days, unless it was in "The Way of a Man," and about which I shall tell you later on in this article. But in "The Resurrection," Mr. Johnson seemed so earnest and looked so handsome, and I so poor and ragged—I was playing the part of a housemaid in his gorgeous palace—that the play appealed to me greatly. According to the story, he makes love to me, surreptitiously. When we are found out, and I, the maid, must pay the penalty "the woman always pays" Mr. Johnson seemed

the most broken-hearted man in the world. Afterwards, as the story continues, we meet again in Siberia, and his penitence seemed so real and earnest as he repeated the words of the Father, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die," that our souls seemed to rise above our earthly thoughts and surroundings.

During those early days of motography's struggle for existence there was no greater student of the art to be found than was Mack Sennett, now the famous star of Keystone comedies. He was known around the Biograph studio as "the villain in the play." Excepting the western dramas, Mr. Sennett played the role of the villain in nearly every picture in which I appeared. There were one or two exceptions. In "A Salvation Army Lass," he was the leader of the Salvation Army band; a guard in "The Slave," in which some one else played the villain. He was always the bartender, in a saloon scene, too. It seems strange that he never worked in comedy.

Mr. Sennett and Mr. Solter were always planning and arguing with Mr. Griffith. Mr. Sennett wanted to do certain things his way—Mr. Solter had an entirely different view of the matter, and Mr. Griffith, being the director and boss, insisted on having his way. They say that the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and when Mr. Sennett was given his way some few years back, his famous Keystone comedies leave little if any cause for complaint.

About four months before I left the Biograph studio an elfin like little girl, hardly more than a child, with beautiful golden hair, came into our midst. Mary Pickford was her name. From the first, Mary won our hearts with her charming ways. She possesses a pout and a frown all her own, which are irresistible. I am unable to recall all of the pictures in which we worked together, but my scrap book reveals a scene from "The Way of a Man," in which the three chief characters were portrayed by "Little Mary," Arthur Johnson and myself. In this, according to the story, I am blind, and my lover falls in love with my sister, "Little Mary," and I discover this fact when my sight is restored and relinquish my claim upon the man to make my sister happy.

"Little Mary," Gertrude Robinson—she had joined us about the same time as did

"Little Mary"—and myself were all jealous over our height. Mary did not like being called little and Gertrude claimed to be taller than Mary and me. In spite of our arguments not a one of us would ever stand the test of measurement. But the truth will out. One day Mary wore a dress that I had worn on a previous occasion, and I noticed that it touched the floor as she walked, while it certainly did not on me, so after starting a happy little argument I remarked on this fact and they all agreed that I was the tallest.

"Well, I knew it all the time," said Mary with a frown and a pout, then smiled, and forgot the matter. Even to this day, and now that all three of us have really grown up, whenever I meet Mary we always start that same old argument.

I am glad of Mary's success, and hope that she will always remain just as unspooled, as little and sweet and dear as she really is today.

A very short time before I departed from the Biograph studio a young man, Owen Moore, by name, worked in one or two pictures, the titles of which I forget. He couldn't help but see Mary, and, being so handsome, he was the target for Mary's eyes. The Goddess of love soon claimed their hearts, and they were married, though that was some time after my Biograph days.

And the name of Owen Moore suggests the name of his brother—Matt Moore, who has been my leading man during the past year in Victor pictures. Both Owen and Matt Moore are excellent picture players, and when I founded the Victor Company I engaged both of them. And I might mention here that Tom Moore, the Kalem star, is a brother to Matt and Owen. Like his brother Owen, he married a motion picture celebrity, and Alice Joyce now signs her name Mrs. Thomas Moore.

Billy Quirk, "the boy comic," as he signs himself, worked in one picture with me, "The Cardinal's Conspiracy." The palatial home of Commodore Benedict, the millionaire, was used as a stage setting for this production and in my scrap book I have written as follows:

"The most beautiful place I have ever seen. I wish I owned it. I think Billy Quirk intends growing a moustache like the one he is wearing."

In the picture accompanying this installment showing a scene from "The Cardinal's



Conspiracy" you can identify Mr. Quirk by finding the young man who wears a dainty moustache and stands on the porch, to the right.

No one ever intended that Mr. Quirk should play in heavy drama. He is a comedian, first, last and all the time. After I had left the Biograph studio Mr. Griffith directed him in the famous "Muggsey" comedies with "Little Mary" playing opposite him, and these attained even greater popularity than the "Jonesy" pictures. Oh, yes, I am always willing to acknowledge the truth. In Vitagraph's "The Girl From Prosperity," Mr. Quirk was but an older "Muggsey."

What seemed to annoy us "Biographers" very much and hold us back from achieving greater artistic success was the speed and rapidity with which we had to work before the camera. Mr. Griffith always answered our complaint by stating that the exchanges and exhibitors who bought our pictures wanted action, and insisted that they get plenty of it for their money.

"The exhibitors don't want illustrated song slides," Mr. Griffith once said to us.

So we made our work quick and snappy, crowding as much story in a thousand foot picture as is now portrayed in five thousand feet of film. Several pictures which we produced in three hundred feet have since been reproduced in one thousand feet. There was no chance for slow or "stage" acting. The moment we started to do a bit of acting in the proper tempo we would be startled by the cry of the director:

"Faster! Faster! For God's sake hurry up! We must do the scene in forty feet."

In real life it would have taken four minutes to enact the same scene. The reason for this is explained as follows—the buyers of the films saw their money being wasted if there was a quiet bit of business being portrayed. They didn't want, as Mr. Griffith had said, "illustrated song slides," when

they had to pay so much money for the illustrated celluloid.

About this time the Pathe Company imported several one reel length pictures which they called features since the leading actors and actresses of the prominent theatres of Paris appeared in them. These pictures were released under the Film D'Art brand and created quite a stir in motion picture circles and especially among all directors. In naturalness, they were far ahead of anything yet produced in this country, and largely for the reason that the important artists portraying the chief roles were permitted to do things as their training had taught them to do. These artists would never have consented to appear in motion pictures at all if they had had to follow the instructions of the ordinary directors. The purpose of the Film D'Art pictures was to record the work of the best artists of France by means of cinematography as a permanent tribute to that artist's ability. So naturally they were permitted to act before the camera as they thought proper.

Following the appearance of the Film D'Art pictures nearly all of the Biograph players asked Mr. Griffith to be allowed to do slow acting, only to be refused. He told us it was impossible since the buyers would positively not pay for a foot of film that did not have action in it.

But before I severed my connection with the Biograph Company Mr. Griffith did commence the production of pictures employing "the close-up" and slow acting, working along the lines suggested by the French actors and actresses. And simultaneously, the American film manufacturers woke up to the fact that they were on the wrong track in producing pictures showing human beings doing things at about four times the speed of real life.

This, then, is the story of my Biograph days, those days in which I was always known as "The Biograph Girl."

*THE fourth installment of Miss Lawrence's own story, "Growing Up With the Movies," will appear in the February issue of PHOTOPLAY MAGAZINE, which will be for sale on all news-stands January 10th. You will not want to miss this installment. In it Miss Lawrence tells how King Baggott broke into the movies, how she was forced to go out to St. Louis to deny that she had been killed in an automobile accident, and above all, how she came to be known as "The Girl of a Thousand Faces." Then there are numerous little stories of studio life, anecdotes, and some very intimate pictures. You won't want to miss this. Order your February issue from your news dealer today.*



# Growing Up with the Movies

MISS LAWRENCE, IN 1907, WAS A "PIONEER"  
MOTION PICTURE ACTRESS, AND NOW, SEVEN  
YEARS LATER, SHE IS A "VETERAN" OF THE GAME.

## By Florence Lawrence

In collaboration with

Monte M. Katterjohn

### FINAL INSTALLMENT

**M**Y motion picture public did not learn my real name until I became an Imp player. That was during the summer of 1909. Upon leaving the Biograph Company I accepted a road engagement with Ezra Kendall, and for a little more than a month appeared before the footlights instead of the camera. While playing a one night stand in some little town out in the middle west I received a telegram from Mr. William V. Ranous, the man who had tweaked my ears for trying to steal into the projection room at the Vitagraph studio some two years previous.

"I am helping to start a new moving picture company and want you for my leading lady. Come to New York at once," it commanded. And I went.

So I listened to Mr. Ranous' offer. Carl Laemmle, the proprietor of a Chicago film exchange, had decided to embark in the business of manufacturing motion pictures. At that time his was a very nervy decision, and one that not only required a lot of determination, but many thousands of dollars. Associated with Mr. Laemmle were the Cochrane boys—Robert and Thomas—who were then conducting an advertising agency in Chicago, in addition to being interested in a song publishing house. The "plunging" spirit evidenced by Mr. Laemmle was natural with them, and the result was the organization of the Independent Moving Pictures Company of America. The name of the film brand—Imp—was coined by making a word out of the first letters of the words "Independent Moving Pictures."

That was Carl Laemmle's start as a manufacturer of motion picture films. To-

day he is the active head of the Universal Film Manufacturing Company—the largest single producing corporation in the world. And when we Imp players began the production of the first Imp picture, a comedy drama called "Love's Stratagem," we did not have a studio, so we could not make any interior scenes!

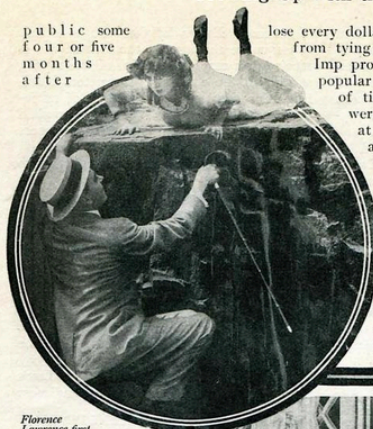
Among the first players to be engaged by Mr. Ranous for the Imp Company were George Loane Tucker, now producing director for the London Film Company; John Brownell, now with the Holland Film Company; Farrell MacDonald, the well known director now with the Tiffany Film Company; Harry Solter, my present director; Owen Moore, now with the Famous Players Film Company; the late John Cumpson, who was the Mr. Jones of the Biograph "Jonesy" pictures; and King Baggot, who is still an Imp leading man.

Owen Moore came to the Imp Company early in 1910 and remained until after I had left the Imp players. Although younger than Mr. Baggot, he played the heavy in nearly all the Imp pictures. I used to call him "the little villain" at that time, for he was of so slight a build and hardly more than a youngster. He was really funny wearing a desperate mustache and brandishing bowie knives and pistols. We all knew that he was better suited to playing juvenile leads, but there was a scarcity of good actors, and players with the natural ability possessed by Owen Moore were not to be had for the mere crooking of a finger. Owen made no complaint, for he was determined to get on as an actor, no matter what his parts might be.

Imp pictures began to "take" with the



public some four or five months after



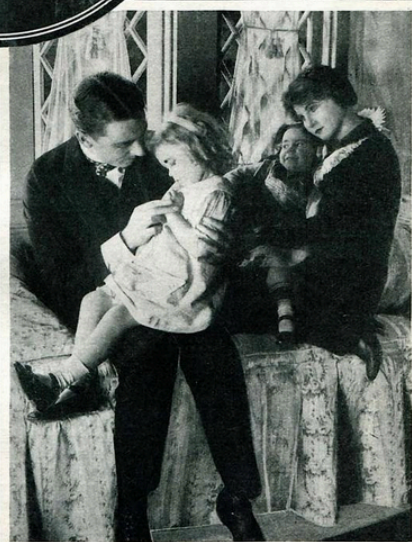
Florence Lawrence first became known by name to the public as the delightful leading lady of the Imp Comedies put out in 1910. This is a scene from "All for Love."

their appearance. At first our photography was poor, and we experienced many difficulties in getting suitable settings. Our studio was inadequately equipped and new scenery and new pieces of property could not be built and painted with the speed of today. We borrowed furniture and the like from stores and factories and made out as best we could with our very limited means. Mr. Laemmle was engaged in a bitter fight with the Motion Picture Patents Company and at times it looked as though he would

lose every dollar. This legal battle prevented him from tying up any great amount of money in Imp productions until they began to become popular with the public. It was just a matter of time, however, and pretty soon there were two producing directors constantly at work—one producing farce comedy and the other producing dramas.

During this time a number of special detectives were kept about the studio constantly to prevent the seizure of our cameras and to keep spies from coming among us and learning our plans, particularly whom we sold our films to. Those were perilous days for the independent film producer! The Motion Picture Patents Company claimed

"It was a relief to intersperse comedy with the sympathetic and genuinely appealing roles that sometimes fell to my lot."



that all cameras used by the independent producers were infringements on their patents, and every independent studio momentarily expected an officer and a score of deputies to swoop down upon them with some sort of court order and seize everything in sight.

Even the players were subjected to espionage. We were forbidden to talk with the players of other companies. Instant discharge was the penalty for violating this rule. Our every action was watched while we were at the studio, and under no circumstances were we permitted to go near the camera—the most treasured possession of all. When we went on trips to make exterior scenes a detective accompanied us, either to see that we were not molested by the spies of rival manufacturers or that we did not attempt to steal the camera secrets of our own company.

It was about this time that I had the most astounding adventure of my life. On my way to the Imp studio on the morning of February 19, 1910, I chanced to buy a newspaper out of pity for the half-clothed little newsboy who accosted me with the plea that he was hungry. My mind was so absorbed with my plans for the day, for I had heaps of work to do, that I had no intention of reading the news. But half-consciously I glanced at the paper and was startled to see several likenesses of myself staring me in the face, topped by a flamboyant headline announcing my tragic end beneath the wheels of a speeding motor car. To say that I was stunned would be putting it mildly. I screamed at the thought, and several passers-by turned to see what was wrong. Not caring to make a scene on the street I hurried away and to the studio, where I read the account in full. According to the story, there was no doubt about the matter—I was dead. I was angered and depressed. I did not know what to do.

#### Mr. Katterjohn takes up the story

The report of Miss Lawrence's death, which originated in St. Louis, spread from coast to coast in a day, in spite of the fact that telegrams were being sent out of New York and Chicago by the hundreds to the effect that she was very much surprised to hear of her death. It was believed these telegrams would silence the report and restore Miss Lawrence to her normal self

once more. Every daily newspaper of any consequence throughout the United States received an emphatic denial of the report, as did all the exchange proprietors handling Imp films and the hundreds of exhibitors who had immediately telegraphed their exchanges. But the smaller papers copied the story from the city dailies.

The matter became more aggravating to Miss Lawrence when it was charged that the whole story was a press agent frame-up. Several rival picture companies stooped to the charge, with the result that Miss Lawrence, already in an extremely nervous condition, broke down completely.

As soon as the Imp actress was able to return to her work it was arranged for her to go to St. Louis where the story had originated and personally appear before the public to refute the statement—that she was dead.

On March 21, 1910, "The St. Louis Times" contained the following headlines:

LEADING WOMAN OF SILENT DRAMA,  
REPORTED DEAD, TO AP-  
PEAR IN ST. LOUIS.

Florence Lawrence, with King Baggot,  
St. Louis Actor, to Describe Work.

An account of the arrival of Miss Lawrence in St. Louis, as seen through the eyes of a woman reporter of "The Times" reads as follows:

"At five o'clock in the afternoon I reached Union Station. There was an immense crowd inside the depot—much larger than the crowd that had greeted President Taft upon his arrival here a few months ago, and akin to the reception accorded Dr. Cook, the North Pole discoverer. Suddenly the throng broke into wild tumultuous shouts as a remarkably pretty young woman appeared at the gate marked 'Track Eight,' on which a Pennsylvania train had just arrived. The crowd surged toward her like a wave, and for a moment it looked as if the young woman would be drowned in the human sea, it being necessary for policemen and station attaches to plunge to her rescue. When a way was cleared for her a tiny woman with a face like a wild flower nervously passed through the narrow aisle, hurriedly climbed into a waiting car and dashed to a hotel. It was Florence Lawrence, 'the Imp Girl,' who had come to St. Louis to refute the repeated reports of her death."



### Miss Lawrence resumes the story

I shall never forget that trip to St. Louis. It simply overwhelmed me. For two days and nights I made short talks—"clever little speeches," so the newspapers said—telling how I came to enter motion pictures. Events came so thick and fast that I was dazzled, but there is one thing I was convinced of, and still believe. The American public, when it loves its heroes and heroines, can love them with a better spirit than any people I know.

Upon the termination of my contract with Mr. Laemmle I spent three months in Europe, recuperating, studying foreign customs and types, and then returned to America to begin my fourth year as a motion picture actress playing opposite Arthur Johnson in Lubin productions.

Mr. Siegmund Lubin, the active head of the Lubin Manufacturing Company, is the most genial, democratic and interesting big man I have ever known. He is a veteran film man and began working on the problem of motion pictures about the time my mother thought it necessary for me to learn my a, b, c's. It is he who has built up the mammoth Lubin business in which his cheerful philosophy has played so big a part. Mr. Lubin is one of those rare lovers of wisdom who follow the precepts of Montaigne and practice what they preach. He is a man of peace, averse to strife of any kind, and it was this happy disposition of his that won me away from the Imp studio.

"My pictures are pretty pictures," he argued. "They are as clear as a bell, and beautiful to look at. You will be pretty in them. Florence Lawrence pictures will be most beautiful."

Throughout the year that I was a Lubin player Mr. Lubin called me his "pretty daughter." I liked him immensely for that, although no one could help liking him whether or no he said pretty things to them. He is known as "Pop" Lubin by all his acquaintances—an affectionate appellation, and he, in turn, speaks of his employees as "my children."

In February of 1913 I left the Lubin Company to take a long rest. My work had been very arduous and trying, and I was extremely nervous, so much so that I could not work to my own satisfaction. I wanted to get away from motion pictures

and motion picture studios for a while and made the great mistake of going to Europe. I found Europe a bad place for an American to rest in, even in the days when the great war was undreamed of. I made a much longer trip than that of the previous year, taking many side trips into Palestine, Turkey, Italy, Greece, Germany, France, Sweden and Denmark—the very spots now drenched in the blood of war. At Luxor, Egypt, I met Miss Gene Gauntier and her Kalem players, and steamed up the Nile with them. In Italy I watched motion pictures which would never pass our censorship in this country.

Upon my return to the land of my birth (the reports that I am a native of Ireland are buncombe) with the aid of Messrs. Patrick A. Powers and Harry L. Solter, I founded the Victor Motion Picture Company, which later became the property of the Universal Film Manufacturing Company. After a year in Victor pictures, I gave up work and devoted my time to rose and garden culture at my country home at Westwood, New Jersey. But, as Mr. Katterjohn has already told you, I was unable to resist the desire to be back in the harness and at work, trying to do bigger and better things than ever before. Of my recent work, you are the judge. I have just completed my sixth year as a motion picture actress, and now I intend to devote several months of my time to resting at Westwood before yielding again to the desire to live amid the studio props, to hear the sputtering of the blazing lamps, the whirr of the camera and the commands of the director. These are the things that count to one who has grown up in their midst. 'Tis like the call of the sawdust ring to one who has always known and felt the pomp and display of the circus. And what are my plans, do you wonder? Dear readers, have I not told you that Fate shapes our destinies, leading the oldest and most experienced of us where she will? If you have enjoyed reading any part of this, my own story, I am more than repaid for the writing of it, and I hope to greet you anew on the silent drama screen.

And now I say good-bye. I love you all—love you with all my heart and soul. When I look from my window at night I wonder if there is anything I have ever done to cause you pain. I hope not. So again, good-bye!



Photograph by Moody, New York.

*Florence Lawrence is as fair as a snow maiden but she can look as barbarically beautiful as any Eastern princess.*